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KENT ON SUNDAY

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PLUS SEE INSIDE Review MAGAZINE FOR GREAT KENTISH CHRISTMAS IDEAS

Grateful Gurkha campaign actress thanks KOS Media readers

JOANNA'S BLIZZARD OF KISSES

By STEVE KNIGHT

JOANNA Lumley has sent a "blizzard of kisses" to Kent on Sunday and its readers for their support in this year's successful Gurkha rights campaign.

The Absolutely Fabulous star called the newspaper on Thursday to say thank you for its extensive coverage of her struggle to change Government immigration policy, thereby allowing all former Gurkha soldiers to settle in the UK if they choose.

She also called on readers to support a new campaign launched this week which seeks to raise £11 million in a year for veterans living in poverty and now too old to leave Nepal.

Ms Lumley said: "Kent on Sunday was fantastic. The truth is, it was you – the Press – that made the whole Gurkha Justice Campaign such a success. Without you, it couldn't have happened and I am forever in your debt.

"I would like to thank you and your readers from the bottom of my heart, and it comes with a blizzard of kisses.

"I'd also like to ask if they can find it in their hearts to dig a little deeper this Christmas and allow these courageous fighters to live out their lives with the dignity they deserve."

Ms Lumley announced the launch of the Debt of Honour campaign on the day she was made vice-patron of the Gurkha Welfare Trust, which for the past 40 years has paid the pensions of the veteran servicemen.

The former fashion icon – who grew up in Rolvenden, near Ashford, and later lived in Wingham, near Canterbury – was mobbed by thousands of grateful Nepalese when she visited the South Asian nation in July.

But Ms Lumley revealed the celebratory trip opened her eyes to the plight of Gurkha veterans, many of whom served with her father, James, in the British Indian Army.

She said: "When we went out there it became apparent that for some of the World War Two veterans there was no way they could leave their hillside villages to come and live in Britain, nor did they want to.

"The Gurkha Welfare Trust pays the pensions of these 10,000 veterans out in Nepal, but they are living on only £1 a day.

"What we are asking now is: can we not give them a little more so they are not sleeping on stone floors in freezing-cold huts?

"Wouldn't it be wonderful if they could live in dignity and a little more comfort than they are already?

"I'm always amazed by the size of the hearts of the British people and I'm just praying they can dig a little deeper to help these courageous men who fought so valiantly to protect them."

The money raised by the Debt of Honour campaign will go towards providing monthly welfare pensions,

CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO

PICTURE: Facundo Arrizabalaga/Rex Features

MANY THANKS: Gurkha justice campaigner Joanna Lumley

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Brutal killer left his victim's lover to die

By **ANNA WHITE** & **MARIJKE COX**
anna.white@kosmedia.co.uk

GUILTY: David Killcullen, left, murdered Gerry Edwards, far right, and left Chris Bevan to die

A HOMOPHOBIC killer faces a minimum of 32 years in jail after he murdered his neighbour and left the dead man's partner to die.

A jury found David Kilcullen, from Bromley, guilty on Tuesday, December 15, of murdering Gerry Edwards and attempting to kill his partner, Chris Bevan.

The 46-year-old was given a life sentence at the Central Criminal Court at the Old Bailey and will serve at least 32 years before being considered for release.

On sentencing, the judge told Kilcullen he had shown no mercy to his victims.

He said: "You were aggressive, violent and overpowering. The victims were no match for you – it was an arrogant and unfeeling attack. You have shown little regret or concern for what you did."

The jury heard how Kilcullen had ordered the couple to lie face down at their flat in Page Heath Villas on Tuesday, March 3, this year before stabbing them repeatedly with a kitchen knife.

Mr Edwards, 59, was killed almost instantly with a massive wound to the heart.

Pathology evidence showed the knife had been used with such force that it had penetrated his breastbone.

Mr Bevan, 57, suffered life-threatening stab wounds and when he tried to escape, his partner's killer began to attack him with broken bottles, leaving him with severe cuts to his face and head.

He was able to break free and make his way through torrential rain to a neighbour's house and alert police and ambulance services.

An hour after the 8pm attack the murderer went to a friend's home in Petts Wood with a green holdall and asked him to provide him with an alibi for the day – which he later refused to do.

Kilcullen disposed of the bag in a large refuse container before admitting to his friend that he had attacked the two men.

The next day he called police and confessed to the brutal murder.

Officers raided Kilcullen's bedsit in The Avenue, close to the couple's home, and found in the sink a knife of the same design as the murder weapon left at the flat.

Kilcullen's DNA was traced back to the scene of the attack from a sock that he used to cover his hands while he stabbed his victims and accidentally left behind.

Mr Bevan, who gave evidence by video link, said he had no idea why they were the targets of the "premeditated and frenzied" attack and recalled a time when the killer had made a remark about their sexuality.

In court, the murderer claimed that he was acting in self-defence as Mr Bevan and Mr Edwards had sexually assaulted him, but his claim was labelled "ridiculous".

Det Chief Insp Cliff Lyons said after the trial: "Kilcullen did not intend either man to survive and identify him as their attacker. He has never displayed any remorse for what he did. By cheating death to give evidence in court, Chris Bevan has seen Kilcullen brought to justice."

'I hope people can give as much as they feel able to'

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

medical care and community aid projects for Gurkha villages.

Shepway councillor and Maidstone Parliamentary hopeful Peter Carroll – who founded the Gurkha Justice Campaign – is still working closely with Ms Lumley and called on the people of Kent to support them again.

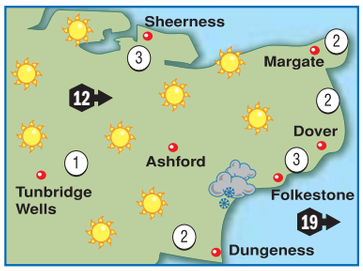
The county has a strong connection with the brave fighters. Shorncliffe Barracks in Folkestone is home to the 2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, while almost half the soldiers from the Maidstone-based 36 Engineers Regiment are Queen's Gurkha Engineers.

Cllr Carroll said: "Kent has become a spiritual home for Gurkhas in Britain and the people of the county have taken them to their hearts. It's obviously a very difficult time for people at the moment because everyone is feeling the pinch, but I hope they can give as much as they feel able to."

Visit www.debtofhonour.org to make a donation.

UNITED: Peter Carroll and Joanna Lumley

Kent today



TODAY: Dry and bright with long periods of sunshine and little if any cloud. A frosty evening. Very cold again with a fresh westerly wind. Max temp 0-3C (32-37F). **TONIGHT:** Dry with variable cloud and clear spells. Brisk westerly winds. A widespread frost. Min temp -3 to 0C (27-32F).

Around Britain

		°C	°F			°C	°F
Aberdeen	snow	3	37	London	sun	2	36
Belfast	snow	3	37	Liverpool	sleet	4	39
Birmingham	sun	3	37	Manchester	fair	3	37
B'mouth	sun	4	39	Newcastle	sun	2	36
Bristol	sun	6	43	Norwich	sun	1	34
Cardiff	sun	5	41	Oxford	sun	3	37
Cork	sun	3	37	Southsea	sun	5	41
Edinburgh	fair	3	37	S'hampton	sun	3	37
Glasgow	snow	4	39	Southport	sleet	5	41
Isle of Man	snow	5	41	Swansea	fair	6	43
Leeds	fair	2	36	Torquay	sun	5	41

Sun & moon

Sunrise	7.59am	Sunset	3.47pm	Lighting up times:
Moonrise	10.16am	Moonset	7.56pm	3.47pm to 8.00am

High Tides

	today				tomorrow			
		ht (m)		ht (m)		ht (m)		ht (m)
Dover	00.55	6.4	13.12	6.1	01.30	6.3	13.45	6.0
Margate	01.42	4.5	14.15	4.3	02.14	4.5	14.49	4.2
St Mary's	06.43	5.3	19.00	5.0	07.18	5.2	19.34	4.8

Week ahead

monday The odd shower max 5C min 0C

tuesday A few showers max 6C min 1C

wednesday Showers, wintry max 5C min 0C

thursday Isolated showers max 6C min 1C

friday Isolated showers max 7C min 2C

saturday Early sunshine max 7C min 3C

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Ho, ho, Holmes

Blockbuster filmed in Kent brings famous detective to silver screen for Christmas

DEVOTED Sherlock Holmes fans are expected to descend on cinemas across the county this Christmas as their favourite detective makes his long-awaited comeback, ***writes Marijke Cox***.

The new film, by Lock Stock director Guy Ritchie, sees Robert Downey Jr take on the role of the much-loved Holmes, and Jude Law plays his faithful sidekick Watson.

Large parts of the blockbuster were filmed in Chatham's Historic Dockyard and tourism chiefs are hoping it will inspire visitors to come to Kent.

Holmes's creator, author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, also has links to the county, including Medway, Dover, Margate and Whitstable.

The release of the film coincides with the 150th anniversary of his birth and hits big screens across the UK on Boxing Day.

Curse

A spokeswoman from Cineworld in Ashford said industry insiders were predicting high box office figures.

"We are expecting Sherlock Holmes to be a big success over Boxing Day and the New Year period," she said.

The blockbuster was premiered this week in London and has so far received mixed reviews.

In true Ritchie-style, it has been souped up with violent fight scenes and near-nudity, causing some traditionalists to boycott its release.

Shooting of the film in Chatham took place at the end of last year and led to the crew joking about "the curse of Sherlock Holmes" after a string of incidents at the historic setting.

Downey Jr was reportedly knocked out after a seven-foot wrestler accidentally punched him in a fight scene, causing the star to have stitches to his face. Another claim is that a petrol tanker exploded, forcing some of the crew to run from the set.

The last time the detective was seen on screen was during the 1984-94 series The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, by Granada Television. Holmes was played by Jeremy Brett and Watson by David Burke, followed by Edward Hardwicke.

The series featured 41 of Conan Doyle's 60 stories, which were written in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

He wrote four novels and 56 short stories before killing off Holmes in 1893, amid mass public uproar.

Conan Doyle lived between 1859 and 1930 and had strong connections to Kent.

Groombridge Place Gardens and its Enchanted Forest were the inspiration for Birlstone Manor in his 1915 book The Valley of Fear.

The author also wrote cryptically about a Margate woman in the short story The Adventure of the Second Stain and investigated spiritualism and a haunting at the Old Oak Cottage in High Street, Minster, near Ramsgate.

In the early 1900s, Conan Doyle was given a speeding ticket in nearby Folkestone, while in 1913 he gave a speech at Dover town hall, returning in 1921 to promote a spiritualist called Thomas Powell.

Pictures: WARNER BROTHERS

TOUGH ACT: Robert Downey Jr (above) and Jude Law (left) join forces in the new Holmes

Yes to superstore

ENVIRONMENTAL group Protect Kent has criticised a local authority for giving plans for a new supermarket the go-ahead.

Proposals for the 34,000 sq ft Sainsbury's to be built in Hythe were approved by Shepway District Council on Tuesday night. The supermarket chain will redevelop the Smiths Medical Site on Military Road for the new store.

Bosses at Protect Kent, a branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), said they were extremely disappointed with the decision.

Councillors voted 9-4 in favour despite a large amount of local opposition.

Arrests after raid

POLICE have seized a large amount of suspected heroin during a drugs bust in Deal.

Officers used a warrant to enter the premises in Stockdale Gardens on Wednesday morning and found the Class A drugs plus associated paraphernalia.

A 39-year-old woman and 36-year-old man were arrested on suspicion of possession with intent to supply controlled drugs.

The woman has been bailed until February and the man was released without charge.

To see this clip search 'tudor'
@ yourkenttv.co.uk

Julie Maddocks finds out how the Tudors may have celebrated Christmas compared with today

Counterfeit goods leave retailer facing £3.2m bill and jail term

A MAN who received a two-year suspended sentence for handling £5,000 of counterfeit goods has been ordered to pay back £3.2 million – believed to be the largest amount ever imposed in such a case, ***writes Nick Ames***.

After a joint investigation by police and Kent Trading Standards, Guarcharan Singh, 41, from Watson Avenue, Chatham, was found with £5,000 of counterfeit luxury handbags, shoes and sunglasses.

On September 7, 2007, at Canterbury Crown Court, Singh was subsequently charged with 43 counts of possessing and selling fake goods in his shop, Chockers in Ashford, and at a market stall in Folkestone.

Counterfeit stock was also found in his warehouse in Chatham.

A confiscation hearing took place at the same court on Tuesday and Singh was ordered to pay back £3,293,796 within six months.

The court ruled that if he does not meet the deadline, he will be imprisoned for 10 years – and still be required to pay back the money.

The investigation began in October, 2006, when search warrants were executed as a result of investigations that had been carried out at businesses across Kent.

From 2004-06, Kent County Council's Trading Standards officers examined Singh's affairs, carrying out test purchases from his premises that led to the seizure of goods valued at thousands of pounds.

Kent Police's Serious Economic Crime Unit and Trading Standards obtained a confiscation order under the Proceeds of Crime Act that allowed them to recover cash and assets obtained by criminal activity.

Det Insp Mark Fairhurst said: "Our forensic accountants investigated Singh's accounts and examined his lifestyle. It was clear that Singh's lifestyle was not supported by his legitimate business.

"This is the largest confiscation order achieved by Kent Police and is a direct result of Kent Police and Kent Trading standards working together to tackle organised crime."

The fake shoes, handbags, purses and jewellery will be destroyed.

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Buying a gift is child's play this Christmas

WITH Christmas Day fast approaching, KOS Media is taking a look at the toys flying off the shelves at Bluewater this season, ***writes Anna White***.

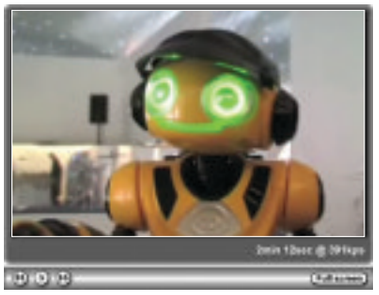
Kent's largest shopping centre has hundreds of shops to find the perfect Christmas gift and all of the stores are extremely busy at this time of year, but it's the toy companies that are always the most in demand.

By the end of the first week in December the Build a Bear Factory had sold out of its best-sellers – Holly and Hal Moose – and parents will now have to wait until Boxing Day for a special-edition delivery.

Holly costs £12.50 and Hal is £15, and a DVD and book telling their story of each wanting to be one of Santa's reindeer are also available to buy.

Timeless favourite Lego is still going strong, with plenty of designs to keep customers entertained – including a special set for £39.50, featuring children's cartoon character Sponge Bob Squarepants, and a traditional Christmas scene for £24.95.

To see this clip search 'toys' @ yourkenttv.co.uk



Discover the top children's toys on sale at Bluewater shopping centre this Christmas

Another shop which is always popular for festive gifts is the Disney Store, which has hundreds of items of film merchandise to choose from, but its best-sellers this year are a helicopter from Cars, which is £30, and a Sleeping Beauty doll set, for £15.

Those buying for the more active youngsters or young-at-heart adults can find the perfect gift at ModelZone, which has been chosen as the exclusive retailer for the Top Gear Stig helicopter, for £39.99.

Someone who would prefer something that works on the ground would love the store's best-selling robot, Roborover, which costs £54.99 and is sure to keep them entertained.

Ultimate gadget shop Red 5 is also offering items to keep families busy this Christmas, including the £15 Candy Grabber and infrared Flying Battling Robot, which costs £30.

As active gifts have proved popular during the past few years, department store John Lewis has introduced a new and bigger version of its mini scooter for older kids – the Maxi Micro Scooter, which costs £89.95.

To see the toys in action and more from Bluewater, visit www.yourkenttv.co.uk.

One good turn...

First turbine signals the start of world's biggest wind farm off Kent coast

By **MARIJKE COX**
marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

THE first of 100 turbines in what will be the world's largest wind farm has been installed in the Thames estuary.

It marks a significant step forward for Swedish power company Vattenfall after it secured the £800 million Thanet Offshore Wind Farm project at the end of last year.

The turbines will be located 12km off Foreness Point, near Margate, generating enough renewable electricity to power almost a quarter of a million homes in the region.

David Hodkinson, head of development at the company, is confident the firm will make good progress, with completion expected around summer 2010.

"The erection of the first wind turbine at Thanet is a fantastic achievement," he said. "We really appreciate the continued high levels of public support from people and businesses in Kent."

The wind farm has been under construction since 2008, with local contractors and workers being used in its development. It is made up of 100 Vestas V90 turbines reaching a height of 115 metres at their highest point – almost as tall as the London Eye.

The wind farm will have a total capacity of 300 megawatts and will supply 240,000 homes with clean energy.

Problems

The siting of the first turbine came as installation work also began on two sub-sea export cables to connect the wind farm to the shore and sub-station at Richborough. They will travel 26km from the turbines to Pegwell Bay, near Ramsgate. The work, which is being carried out by Subocean marine installation contractors, will be carried out over a two-month period.

Pegwell Bay is known for its wildlife and marshland, but a spokeswoman at Vattenfall insisted this would not be disrupted during work.

"Environmental studies have been carried out over the last four years to ensure any disruption to the beach and marshland is kept to an absolute minimum," she said.

"A trial was done using heavy equipment in August this year and the work has been approved by Thanet District Council and Natural England."

This step forward in the Thanet offshore development follows criticism of Vattenfall's Kentish Flats wind farm, off Herne Bay.

It has suffered repeated problems in the four years since it was built, with gear boxes of all 30 turbines having to be replaced.

A spokeswoman at Vattenfall said: "The experience at Kentish Flats wind farm has been valuable for all concerned because we have learnt a lot about operating a wind farm in a harsh environment. These lessons are being applied to our Thanet scheme."

ROTARY CLUB: An aerial view of the Kentish Flats wind farm, which will eventually host 100 turbines off the Ramsgate coast
Picture: CHRIS LAURENS

Soldiers' sacrifice averted tragedy

Rifleman Brown

TWO British soldiers sacrificed their lives to stop Taliban soldiers detonating their devices in a packed marketplace, their commanding officer has said.

Rifleman James Brown, 18, from Orpington, and Lance Corporal David Kirkness, 24, died in Afghanistan on Tuesday while serving with the 3rd Battalion The Rifles. They were killed while manning a vehicle checkpoint alongside an Afghan National Army section to provide reassurance and security to the local community. Two Afghan soldiers were also killed in the suicide attack.

Lance Corporal Kirkness died immediately and Rfn Brown on the way to the hospital, in Camp Bastion.

Rfn Brown only joined the Army this year and had arrived with B Company of 3 Rifles less than a fortnight ago.

Rfn Brown's family, who live in Orpington, released a statement calling him a "true hero".

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BASE CAMP: Corporal Jenny Walker

Corporal sends her Christmas greeting from Camp Bastion

DURING the current season of goodwill, soldiers based in Afghanistan have been sending their thoughts and prayers to loved ones in Britain.

Corporal Jenny Walker, from Bexleyheath, is a nurse based at the field hospital in Camp Bastion – the main British base deep in the desert.

The 25-year-old is serving on a busy six-month tour in the war-torn country. This is her second operational tour, having previously served in Iraq two years ago.

The hospital's skilled and dedicated staff have saved the lives of many soldiers badly wounded in action in the field and are regarded with honour and heartfelt appreciation by the rest of the armed services engaged in the bloody conflict with the Taliban.

Cpl Walker said it was difficult but rewarding and she was enjoying it. She is due to return to the UK in April.

Her parents Gary and Diane still live in Bexleyheath and she herself attended Thamesmead Community College.

Far from home this Christmas she wrote: "Hello mom and dad, although I am thousands of miles away please know that I am thinking of you both during this festive period.

"I hope you had an amazing birthday mom and that the flowers made you smile.

"Have a glass of champagne for me on Christmas Day. See you both very soon.

"Love you both xx"

Thousands are left stranded as county is hit by severe weather

Pictures: JON COATES/ALEX BRITCHER

It's snow go as blizzards cause chaos

HUNDREDS of schools shut, snowball fights on the M2 and Davina McCall stranded in her car – winter hit Kent this week, ***writes Marijke Cox***.

And forecasters at the Met Office have warned there's more to come this weekend, although not quite as severe as the weather seen on Thursday night and Friday.

Heavy snow and treacherous conditions saw the county grind to a halt, with police receiving more than 5,500 calls in 12 hours.

Parts of the M20 and M2 were closed due to accidents and treacherous driving conditions, with police warning people to stay indoors.

On Thursday night, about 200 people were left stranded in their cars on the motorways after roads became impassable, while a jack-knifed lorry on the A21, near the Tunbridge Wells turn-off, also led to major delays.

Big Brother presenter Davina McCall was one of the unfortunate ones trapped for several hours. She told Radio Five she was "wedged in a series of cars" and called the police after a couple of hours who came to her aid.

Some 1,000 people were also forced to stay overnight at a party in Detling Hill after snow blocked the exit roads.

More than 200 schools were closed on Friday, the last day of the Christmas term, and many workers were unable to reach their offices.

Some motorists, who had taken the step of trying to get into work, sat in their cars on the M20 and M2 for several hours before turning back and going home. According to a caller on talkSPORT radio, a giant snowball fight between lorry drivers – Britain versus the rest of Europe – was held by the side of the M2.

Cooperation

Maidstone, Medway, Tunbridge Wells and north Kent were the areas worst-hit, with much of south and east Kent left untouched.

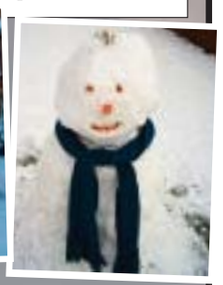
Some places had up to 20cm of snow, while people in Thanet, Folkestone and Dover woke up to just a dusting on Friday morning.

Train services were delayed or cancelled across the county, but limited services on most routes were running.

Chief Supt Mathew Nix, from Kent Police, thanked the public for their cooperation during the chaotic time.

He said: "In 12 hours we experienced double the number of calls we usually receive. Our staff are working extremely hard to ensure that we continue to protect the people of Kent."

For further information on the weather, see www.metoffice.gov.uk, or for advice to motorists go to www.kent.police.uk.



WHITE OUT: Some places had up to 20cm of snow, which caused chaos on roads and forced several train services to be cancelled

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KOS Media launches free new app for Apple iPhone

KEEPING up with the news across our county has just got easier with our new application for the Apple iPhone, ***writes Gary Wright.***

With the Kent News App, you can read all our news, reviews, features and sport in the palm of your hand, watch our videos and hunt for a new job, look for a new house and find cars for sale. This is a world-first and means you can see all our newspapers exactly as they are printed, direct to your iPhone or iPod Touch – and it costs you nothing.

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He said: "Anyone who has used the iPhone or iPod touch already knows they are leading the way in mobile web technology.

"We decided this was another great way to bring our unique range of online and traditional newspapers to even more people.

"It's been developed with PageSuite, which also developed the online editions of our newspapers, with page-turning technology and videos running in the news pages.

"It has been a huge success for us. Hundreds of thousands of people already have access to our county and local papers online.

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Tasty turkey down to rearing, says farmer

By **MARIJKE COX**
marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

THE secret behind the perfect turkey is not down to the way it's cooked, according to an award-winning farmer.

Phil Baxter, who owns Cottage Farm in Cudham, Sevenoaks, insists that rearing is the key to a tasty bird this Christmas.

And the farmer, who scooped an unprecedented five awards at a recent national turkey competition, says he can guarantee his birds have enjoyed the best possible start in life.

"They're fed grain and have a lot of space to roam around in," he said.

"We do everything by hand here – we rear them, pluck them and truss them by hand.

"We also hang them for at least a week, which helps the flavour develop."

Mr Baxter, who has bred turkeys for the past 30 years, said unlike supermarket produce, his turkeys are sold at six months old.

"In supermarkets they are often younger and less developed and everything is done by machine instead of hand," he said.

"How a turkey is prepared before it's cooked is more important than the actual cooking."

Mr Baxter, who owns the farm with his wife Karen, has already seen a record number of turkeys sold from his butchery at Polhill Garden Centre in Badgers Mount, Sevenoaks.

"We first started out in 1978 with three turkeys and now we sell around 2,000 of them a year," he said.

The farmer insists that despite the recession and people's preference for other meat, he has not seen a decline in the desire for the traditional turkey this Christmas.

"We're having the best year ever and we'll probably sell out," he said.

The farm produces white and bronze turkeys weighing from eight to 35 kilos that are sold across Kent and the South East.

The average price of a family turkey weighing 11lbs is about £50.

Mr Baxter said: "We reflect the quality in the price, but we're not overly expensive."

Cottage Farm swept the board at the recent UK turkey awards, which was judged by the chairman of the British Poultry Council.

It won five awards out of 12 categories, including best for brace of white turkeys and bronze turkeys, and best in show.

AWARD WINNERS: Phil Baxter with his bronze and white turkeys, and left, with Andy Spencer, butchery manager

Fat not for birds

THE RSPB is warning people not to put out the leftover fat from their roast dinner this Christmas as it is dangerous to birds.

Many people believe turkey fat is as beneficial to birds as other fats, like lard and suet. They pour it on to bird tables or mix it with seeds, thinking it will give birds energy and nutrients. But the wildlife charity is warning that it could actually kill them.

Kirsi Peck, RSPB wildlife adviser, says: "Roasting tin fat is likely be mixed with lots of other juices which will go off very quickly and cause disease on bird tables.

"It could also damage birds' feathers which are so important for keeping them warm."

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COUNTY Hall is looking for carers prepared to 'foster' an adult.

The Kent Adult Placement Scheme places vulnerable people, aged 18-99, who may be old or have learning or physical difficulties, in a home environment, and the team is looking for new carers.

Kent County Council cabinet member for adult social services Cllr Graham Gibbens, said: "The scheme gives people who wouldn't have the help of a family the chance to benefit from the support of a caring home. It is rewarding for everyone and if you have room for one more at your table this year, do get in touch."

See www.kent.gov.uk/adultplacementscheme or call 01233 652401 for more details.

Troops' tickets

SERVING soldiers are being offered free tickets to see Lesley Joseph in Cinderella at the Orchard Theatre in Dartford.

Qdos Entertainment has donated 420 tickets for panto performances at 21 of its theatres as part of the Tickets for Troops initiative.

Register at www.ticketsfortroops.org.uk.

READY TO GO: Just some of the 66 gritting lorries that are on stand-by across Kent

Gritters loaded and ready to go

ROAD chiefs have swept aside fears there may not be enough salt to cope with the current icy weather.

Earlier this week the AA warned that half of the UK's local authorities only had enough grit for six days of continuous freezing, and that councils had 250,000 tonnes less in stock than a decade ago.

However, the Local Government Association has blasted the claim as "ridiculous scaremongering", while Kent County Council says it is more than ready to cope with an icy onslaught.

Cabinet member for highways Cllr Nick Chard said: "We are very well prepared. It's a year-round operation to ensure we have enough salt and are ready for changes in the weather. We've stockpiled the grit and have plenty of it to put down, like we did last year. We didn't run out then and I'm sure we won't this year. We're ready for a cold winter."

Kent Highway Services owns 66 salting lorries at depots in Tonbridge and Ashford, which have been on standby since the cold weather programme began on October 19.

Back then the department had 20,000 tonnes of salt in storage, with the figure having fallen to 18,000 tonnes since – enough to last for 20 days of continuous freezing with the option to restock.

Of the 66 lorries, 51 have been fitted with new equipment designed to tackle the problem of grit being blown to the side of the road before it has a chance to stick to the surface.

Cllr Chard said: "Last year we trialled something called pre-wetted salt. It's a new system that sprays a saline solution on the crushed rock salt as it is fired out of the lorries, with the main advantage being that it sticks to the road better and is not just blown off to the side.

"The other advantage is that we use less, so it's better environmentally and financially. It's a relatively new procedure."

Kent Highways would not reveal how much the new machines cost – saying the figures were "commercially sensitive" – but Cllr Chard said the money saved on salt would repay the price within a year, adding: "It's very good from a financial point of view."

Biggs author cashes in on train robber's story

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

RONNIE Biggs' biographer is set to profit from his friend's crimes after agreeing to sell his book's television rights to Hollywood.

Medway resident Mike Gray – author of Ronnie Biggs: The Inside Story – will receive about a quarter of the £30,000 due to be paid out by American TV director Chris Hanaford, whose office is located on Sunset Boulevard.

A similar amount will be paid to co-author Tel Currie, with the remainder helping to fill the coffers at Apex Publishing.

Mr Gray has been friends with the Great Train Robber since 1989 when he was still hiding away in Brazil, and says he would love either Bob Hoskins or Michael Caine to play the part of Biggs on the small screen.

He said: "It came out of the blue because I never thought a company would come in for the film rights, but it's really exciting. We're just waiting for them to return the contracts.

"I was slightly disappointed a British firm didn't come forward though, as I think it would have given the film a raw edge.

"I've seen an American reconstruction of the Great Train Robbery on the Discovery Channel and it was pretty awful – they even had dollar signs on the money bags.

"Everything I do in regards to the book I let Ronnie know. I don't have to but I do it out of respect for the man, and I haven't heard anything negative back from him, so that's good."

£2.6 million

Biggs was a member of the 15-strong gang that attacked the Glasgow to London mail train in August, 1963, making off with £2.6 million in used banknotes in what at the time was the largest robbery in British history.

He served 15 months of a 30-year prison sentence before going on the run in Spain, Australia and Brazil, returning voluntarily to the UK in 2001 when he was immediately re-arrested and imprisoned.

Mr Gray campaigned for Biggs to be released on compassionate grounds when the 80-year-old was struck down with severe pneumonia back in July. Justice Secretary Jack Straw freed him within weeks.

Yet despite claims he had only days to live, the former fugitive is still alive and kicking more than four months on.

Mr Gray, who lives in Rainham, said: "I last saw him three weeks ago and he's not doing too badly, but he still has this terrible cough that will never go away.

"People see him out and about and think he's as fit as a fiddle and that we've been taking the mick, but 20 out of 24 hours a day he's in bed being fed through a drip.

"All he wanted was to be able to see his granddaughter as a free man, and now he does every other day.

"He'll now be able to enjoy his first family Christmas out of prison, but I think he maybe only has a year left."

MONEY SPINNER: Biographer Mike Gray is friends with freed robber Ronnie Biggs

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Tent just one of stars in classy family show

CHRIS BRITCHER takes a trip to the big blue tent of Canterbury's Marlowe Arena to catch up with this year's big ticket pantomime – Peter Pan

TEAM WORK: Ben Roddy as Smee and Ade Edmondson as Captain Hook keep the laughs coming in Peter Pan

REVIEW

PANTOMIME, by its very nature, requires a large dollop of silliness to differentiate it from everyday theatre. But sometimes it can all be a little too much.

And, in truth, Marlowe pantomimes of the past have suffered from an excess of daftness.

Not so this year, however. Because Peter Pan has flown into a very different Marlowe environment and it reeks of class.

Now don't get me wrong, silliness is still here in spades – just that it's not shovelled on with gay abandon. It's well-timed, well-judged, and balanced with a clearly-defined storyline. In short, it's perhaps the best for years.

Oh, and the icing on the cake is an absolutely sublime lead role by Ade Edmondson.

He sings, he dances, he reminds us how he can be effortlessly funny, raising a smile one moment and a belly laugh the next.

Yet the real star of this show – and the main attraction for many – is its setting. A couple of months after the curtain fell on last year's pantomime, the curtain also fell on the old city centre Marlowe Theatre. And, right now, work is beginning on that site to create its multi-million pound replacement.

Enchanting

So this year the pantomime has decamped to Kingsmead coach park on the edge of the city. And there it lives within a giant blue circus-style big-top dubbed the Marlowe Arena. It would be easy to criticise and poke fun, but in reality it makes the whole experience a more fascinating one.

As you stroll in, the bar has a huge mast draped over it, in keeping with the theme of the production. Plenty of staff ensure queues don't get too long, and the whole thing is really quite enchanting. Plus, the temperature inside was fine.

OK, so the toilets being outside is not ideal, but it's a small price to pay for something so, well, fun. And isn't that the whole point?

What's more, this panto is fun in capital letters – underlined by strong lead roles from the quartet of Edmondson, the likeable Ben Roddy (as Smee), West End starlet Gemma Sutton (as Wendy), and, of course, Dave Lee (as Tinkerbelly… can you see what they did there?).

Steven Butler does a fine job as Peter, and his entrance is quite something, although it ends up being outdone, remarkably, by the arrival of a certain piece of wooden furniture... regulars will know exactly what that means.

Yet while Edmondson is magnificent as Captain Hook, it is the balance of the production which is worthy of most praise. The story never drops and every scene works to drive it along. Producer Paul Hendy doesn't always get it right, but this year he has hit it right on the button.

The result is a classic piece of family theatre which is warm, witty, daft and, yes, very silly. But brilliantly so. And the tent is a success. Don't make the false economy this year of not buying tickets – this is value for money and a treat for young and old alike.

• *Peter Pan runs from now until January 17 with matinee and evening performances. To book tickets ring 01227 787 787. For more details see www.marlowepeterpan.co.uk.*

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ANY AGE: Now adults can make their mark at Kent Youth Theatre

Youth theatre hunt for grown-up rebels

ADULTS are invited to step into the spotlight by joining the award-winning Kent Youth Theatre.

The company has been offering performance and training opportunities to young people for a decade, producing acclaimed shows that give youngsters the chance to shine.

Now KYT has plans for over-16s and adult opportunities, so if treading the boards has always been your dream, take a look at what the company has to offer with its 'stage for any age'.

Artistic director Richard Andrews is planning a production of Rebel Without A Cause, the iconic 1950s film starring James Dean and Natalie Woods.

The stage adaptation will be performed at Canterbury's Gulbenkian Theatre from July 5-7 and Mr Andrews would like to hear from any over-18s who would like to take part.

This classic tale of teenage angst needs talented adult performers to work with the young cast, and anyone who is interested can email their CV to Richard@kentyouththeatre.co.uk, mentioning the role they are interested in.

Movement skills would be an advantage, but all applicants will be invited to a workshop audition.

The Canterbury-based company started life in 1997 when drama teacher Mr Andrews agreed to help children interested in drama.

Stagerage later merged with another group called Kent Youth Theatre and went on to become extraordinarily successful, boasting more than 1,200 students past and present.

Kent Youth Theatre was highly commended in the public sector section at the KOS Media £1m Business Challenge Awards.

With more than 30 productions to its name, the company has made a difference in the lives of many young people and its success looks set to continue.

• ***To find out more about Kent Youth Theatre, visit the website at www.kentyouththeatre.co.uk.***

Downfall of a Kent MP shot for cowardice

By **MARIJKE COX**
marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

THE rise and fall of an MP who was shot for cowardice during the Seven Years War is revealed in a new book.

The account, written by University of Greenwich lecturer Chris Ware, from Welling, reveals the history of Admiral John Byng, who represented Rochester from 1751-57.

In the book, Admiral Byng – His Rise and Execution, Mr Ware covers Byng's 40-year career at sea and the defeat of his fleet in Minorca by the French, which led to his eventual downfall.

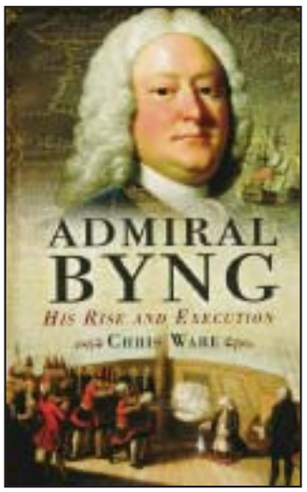
Accused

Byng had been ordered to stop the French blockading Minorca in 1756, early on in the Seven Years War, but he was defeated and then accused of cowardice.

Many historians believe he was a scapegoat for Government and Admiralty failure to prevent the loss of Minorca.

Byng was locked up in Queen Anne Court, in Greenwich Hospital, before being shot on the quarter-deck of his former flagship, Monarch, in Portsmouth Harbour in March 1757.

Public anger over Byng's defeat at Minorca saw effigies of him burned or hanged throughout the country, and philosopher Voltaire famously wrote in his novel Candide that "it is good to kill an admiral from time to time to encourage the others".



SCAPEGOAT: Lecturer Chris Ware charts the rise and fall of Admiral Byng in his new book, left

Byng's trial and execution was the hot topic of the time and his downfall was talked about throughout the country.

Mr Ware, a lecturer at Greenwich University's Maritime Institute, said he used to think of Byng when looking up at Queen Anne Court, which is now home to the business school.

He said: "Despite being a hard-nosed historian, on cold dark winter mornings I caught myself looking up at the upper windows of Queen Anne Court, thinking of Byng bent over a table furiously scribbling another letter in his own defence, while marines stood guard in the stairwell.

"Given that Byng was middle-aged and portly, the deputy governor of Greenwich Hospital, Isaac Townsend, was arguably overzealous in his efforts to prevent his escape.

"Not only was he guarded by a contingent of marines, the boatswain who supervised the wards and 12 of the more able-bodied pensioners, but bars were also fitted on the chimneys and windows to prevent his escape."

After Byng's execution, Townsend replaced him as MP for Rochester, which had two members of parliament chosen by the Admiralty.

• ***Admiral Byng – His Rise and Execution, published by Pen and Sword, is priced at £19.99 and is available at www.pen-and-sword.co.uk.***

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Crash horror brought home

Students mourning death of pals get the safety message

A HARD-hitting campaign warning youngsters of the dangers of driving has been taken to a college still mourning the loss of two of its students in car crashes, ***writes Marijke Cox.***

Emergency crews from the fire service, Kent Police and the Kent Air Ambulance Trust staged a mock road accident at North West Kent College, on what was an emotional day for pupils and staff.

Earlier this year on New Year's Day, fashion student Sophia Edwards, 17, was killed when the car in which she was travelling crashed into a bus stop in Eltham in London. The teenager, from Meopham in Gravesend, hoped to be a fashion designer.

Just three months later, 17-year-old IT student Robert Cooter, from Gravesend, died when his Vauxhall Corsa hit a telegraph pole near Istead Rise.

To bring home the stark message that driving can kill, emergency crews showed a mock crash at the college's Dartford campus.

Organisers hope it will encourage young drivers to be responsible behind the wheel.

Students Laura Collins and Sam Ramsey, both 16, played the occupants of the car, which had supposedly knocked a cyclist down and hit a tree. Firefighters smashed through the windows to try and free them and the roof of the car was cut off. The 'victims' admitted it brought home the reality of what happens in an accident and showed them how serious it could be.

About 500 students watched the demonstration. Gill Smith, careers and enrichment coordinator at the college, said it was impressive to see the emergency services at work: "This is the first joint event we have run and we shall stage more."

ON SITE: Firefighters cut passengers from a car during the demonstration

Quentin Williamson, a spokesman for North West Kent College, added: "We feel it was a success and hope it will save people from the terrible consequences of a car accident. We have had two students killed this year."

The reconstruction, called Operation Carmaggedon, is being rolled out across Kent as part of the 'Reckless driving: cut it out before we have to cut you out' campaign by Kent Fire and Rescue Service.

Kent Police and the Kent Air Ambulance Trust are also working on the campaign.

Crews carried out a demonstration in Chatham High Street last week, to show their role in the aftermath of a serious car crash.

Medway fire station manager Jim Ramsden said: "Our firefighters are regularly called out to terrible scenes where they have to cut young drivers and their passengers from wrecked cars. We warn motorists about the destruction and possible devastating effects of poor driving, but we're still attending far more car crashes than house fires.

"So now we're showing them those consequences by taking this shocking demonstration and its messages to places where young people spend their time."

PC Andy Ledger, roads policing officer at Medway police station, said drivers needed to understand the reality of a crash.

"It can shatter lives, and all of our emergency services want motorists to think carefully about their actions behind the wheel," he said.

"Taking a risk whilst driving just isn't worth it and we hope those attending Carmaggedon events listen to our advice."

We're dreaming of a green Christmas

WHILE it may be traditional to wish for a white Christmas, Friends of the Earth are issuing advice as to how to have a green one.

The group's head of climate change Mike Childs, said: "There are lots of things people can do to go green and save cash – from buying local and organic food to recycling your tree."

Tips for a greener Christmas:

1. If you're buying a real tree, plant or recycle it after Christmas. If it has roots you could plant it in your back garden, or contact the council for recycling information.
2. Shop local – buy supplies from nearby farms and community shops.
3. Gifts don't have to be brand-new or expensive. Browse second-hand shops to find classic accessories, retro furniture, books, games and toys to help take the pressure off our planet's dwindling resources.
4. More than half of all car trips are less than five miles. Enjoy the quieter roads, cut your emissions and work off the festive excess by making local visits on foot or bike.
5. Re-use wrapping paper or find green alternatives. Wrapping paper is often too beautifully designed to throw away so you could save it for crafts projects or to use next year. You could also wrap up your presents in cloth or decorated boxes.
6. Send electronic Christmas cards instead of paper ones – they save money and time as well as being kinder to the environment.
7. Buy Christmas presents from charities to support worthy causes.
8. Back planet-friendly food and farming by buying organic.
9. Go energy efficient by changing to a green energy supplier like Good Energy, which buys all of its electricity from renewable sources.
10. If you're getting a new mobile phone this Christmas, ethically recycle your old one.

IN SEASON: Green is the new white

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Pirates of the Caribbean

Smugglers guilty of 200lb cocaine haul

By NICK AMES
nick.ames@kosmedia.co.uk

A GANG caught trying to smuggle cocaine worth £10 million into Britain on a yacht are facing jail.

Customs officials swooped on the vessel 15 miles off the Cornish coast as the smugglers prepared to complete a crossing from the Caribbean.

Southwark Crown Court heard the boat, called Ronin – which means rogue Samurai warrior – had been tracked after being bought in Trinidad and loaded with 200lbs of cocaine in South America.

Douglas Wood, 59 of Walderslade Avenue, Sandwich Bay, and David Coxon, 53, were arrested at the helm of the £24,500 vessel on September 12 last year.

Wood was this week found guilty of conspiracy to import 91 kilos of cocaine, the Metropolitan Police said.

Coxon, of Middle Street, Newcastle, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to import 91 kilos of cocaine at earlier hearing.

Speaking after the guilty verdicts, police revealed other members of the gang were also involved in armed cash van robberies.

Investigators merged two separate inquiries which involved Flying Squad and organised crime teams.

Police said two men, Patrick Walsh and John Dunlop, were responsible for preparing to rob a series of cash vans in Hertfordshire.

But during a surveillance operation, officers discovered Walsh wanted to smuggle cocaine into Britain on a yacht.

He made repeated trips to Trinidad, Tobago, Barbados and Grenada using the false name of Michael Sheridan. On some occasions he was joined by Wood.

Wood and Coxon eventually set sail from Grenada, falsely telling customs they were heading to Brazil. Instead they picked up the drugs in Guyana and headed to Britain.

Meanwhile, the other gang members were in Britain preparing for a cash van heist in Barking, east London.

On August 21, they were caught red-handed by armed police carrying two pistols and ammunition.

A week later Walsh was caught carrying a handgun, gloves and a balaclava at a Total petrol station in Denham, Hertfordshire.

Walsh, 48 of Blairhead Drive, Watford, admitted drugs, weapons and robbery offences.

Dunlop, 52, of Silchester Road, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex, was convicted of possessing two guns and 213 rounds of ammunition. He was sentenced to eight years imprisonment.

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Asian county councillor follows in father's footsteps with MBE

THE first-ever Asian Tory councillor to be elected at county level has been awarded an MBE for his years of service to the community.

Avtar Sandhu, who represents Dartford North East, was commended at a ceremony at Buckingham Palace and handed the medal by Princess Anne.

The 44-year-old has followed in the footsteps of his late father Darshan Singh Sandhu MBE who was praised for his long-serving work in the community before his sudden death in 1999.

Cllr Sandhu said he was proud to represent the Asian community at county level and hoped it would promote equality between the different races.

"I want people to live harmoniously together and I think me being in this position helps," he said. "I couldn't believe it when I found out about the MBE – it made me very proud."

The father-of-two, who lives in Dartford with his family, was elected onto Kent County Council earlier this year becoming the first ever Punjabi to win a seat in the county.

CEREMONY: Avtar Sandhu receives his MBE from the Princess Royal

He was made deputy cabinet member for communities by council leader Cllr Paul Carter days after being elected.

He is director of Dartford Football Club, chairman of the North West Kent Racial Equality Council and general secretary of the Indian Oversees Congress UK.

He runs two businesses; Mobile Bar Hire, and Amar Hall, an events venue near East Hill in Dartford which sponsors Dartford Football Club's under-18s team.

"I've always been heavily involved in the community," he said.

"My father was very much into politics although he never stood for election. He did so much in the community and I suppose that's where I got it from.

"National and local politics has always been a big part of my family, so for me to become the first Asian Conservative county councillor is very exciting – it's very significant.

"I think it is very important that equality is promoted in this way and I'm extremely proud to be serving such a prominent community in Kent.

Cllr Sandhu has lived in Dartford for almost 40 years and has helped raise money for numerous charities over that time.

He assisted in raising £16,000 for the Boxing Day Tsunami appeal and supported a major Help for Heroes event in London.

"I am a community-orientated person and so I enjoy every moment of my work," he said.

"I feel I'm doing a good job."

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Police 'nearly shot' Corrie Craig

CORONATION Street star Craig Charles was almost shot dead by a police sniper during the filming of a gangland movie.

The 45-year-old Corrie actor – who plays cabbie Lloyd Mullaney in the soap – was taking part in the filming of The Dealer on the River Medway when armed officers surrounded the set.

Filming of the movie, directed by former BBC music composer Tony Royden, had to be stopped when the Red Dwarf actor realised there was a infrared laser dot on his chest as a police marksman took aim.

Police were called out after shocked members of the public thought they had witnessed a series of daylight murders as people had the their throats slit and were pushed off a boat into the river.

They only called off the operation when they spotted the target was the Red Dwarf actor and when an officer spotted Cold Feet star John Thompson rehearsing his lines in a nearby boatyard.

Mr Royden revealed how he had forgotten to tell officers about the filming of the gangland movie and that it was a moment "which could have seen a tragic death".

He said: "We had been trying to conceal the filming but apparently the police got five different calls telling them someone was being murdered.

RED DOT: Craig Charles saw infrared laser on his chest while he filmed murder scene

"Luckily, Craig Charles was such a professional that the situation was diffused very quickly, but it could have been a tragedy."

Mr Royden, who also wrote the book The Dealer, revealed the 2005 incident this week at a booksigning in London.

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Feel-good Christmas shopping

Artist's dramatic images captures demise of shopping life by the seaside in Margate

Sad reflections of a town's decline

By STEVE KNIGHT
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

THE decline of a once-thriving seaside town has inspired a new art project based around empty shop fronts.

Once one of the most popular destinations for British holidaymakers, Margate has experienced a dramatic fall from grace in recent years and has suffered greatly from a drop in tourism sparked by the increased use of air travel.

But rather than allow himself to feel down in the dumps about the situation, local photographer Johnny Hepburn, 48, used it to his advantage and developed a unique new art project.

He said: "It wasn't something I planned, but when I moved to Margate recently I was pretty horrified by the state of the high street because there were so many empty shops about.

Horrified

"I decided to take some pictures to demonstrate the problems that all high streets are experiencing at the moment, but I didn't want to concentrate too much on the doom and gloom.

"I purposely wanted to showcase these facades with lighting that I thought would instil a sense of curiosity and create an image that would enhance them.

"I used strong sunlight and the sunsets that Margate is famous for to capture melancholy, and of course the life existing around the shops."

Originally from north London, the former Camberwell College of Art student spent most of last year taking pictures of World Heritage Sites throughout central and southern Europe.

Mr Hepburn says that his next goal is to capture all of the sites in the UK that have been made World Heritage Sites by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco). These currently include Canterbury Cathedral, the Tower of London, Stonehenge and 25 others.

There are also plans for Chatham Dockyard and the surrounding area to be afforded such status, which Mr Hepburn believes would be a good idea.

He said: "I do think it's of great importance to preserve our cultural heritage, and if that

FAÇADES: Johnny Hepburn's images of closed down shops capture one side of Margate, where the Turner Contemporary is now being built

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means applying to become a World Heritage Site to bring in more funds than I'm all for it.

"When I was off travelling around southern and central Europe last year, particular cities and sites that were of historical importance were those I headed for the most. It's important that these sites bring in tourists and their money, so for Chatham to be developed along those lines will hopefully be a good thing."

• To view Mr Hepburn's empty shops art project, visit www.flickr.com/photos/johnnysenough.

Man on bigamy charge over love triangle at prison

PRISON officers on the Isle of Sheppey are embroiled in a love triangle after one was charged with bigamy, ***writes Jill Hurst.***

Andrew Scott, 40, of Wickham Close, appeared in Sittingbourne Magistrates Court on December 11 to face charges of marrying his prison officer lover while he was already married to a second prison officer, Alfrey Johns.

Scott pleaded not guilty and blamed his ex-wife for failing to complete the divorce process.

The three all work for the prison service based at HMP Swale cluster which includes Elmley, Stamford Hill and Swaleside Prison.

Mr Scott married his new wife Valerie Arnold at Newington church, near Sittingbourne, on October 29 and the pair honeymooned overseas. The service was conducted by Church of England minister, Rev Elizabeth Cox.

On return Mr Scott was arrested and charged with bigamy.

Defence solicitor Andrew McCooey said Scott had assumed his first wife had sorted out the final details of the divorce as she had submitted the initial petition. However, although Ms Johns had filed for divorce on April 4, 2009, and received a decri nisi she failed to apply for a decri absolute meaning the couple were still legally wed.

Bearded Scott spoke only to confirm his details and plead not guilty.

Magistrate Jane Clayton adjourned the case to December 22 and released Scott on conditional bail.

She warned him not to approach his wife Ms Johns, or Rev Cox before the hearing. If convicted Mr Scott could receive up to six months imprisonment.

Neither woman attended the hearing.

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Coin picture: PRINT SERVICES, NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

MISTAKEN: Rather than beinga beauty like Elizabeth Taylor, Cleopatra appears to be much less attractive according the coin recently discovered. And even Lord Nelson attempted to be a benefits cheat according to Phil Mason's history book with a difference

Clearing out the white lies from history

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

LORD Nelson, George Washington and other heroes of world history have their reputations torn to shreds in a new collection of little-known facts.

Gillingham author Phil Mason drew from his library of more than 5,000 reference books to expose some of the lies that have been told over the years to make former presidents, prime ministers and emperors appear more wholesome than they really were.

The end result, What Needled Cleopatra… and Other Little Secrets Airbrushed From History, is now published.

Mr Mason said: "The book upsets some of the comfortable bits of history. I'm sure some people won't like it because when somebody like me comes along and says 'actually the story isn't quite as pure as that', it takes the compass points that they are used to away.

"The book is based on the way we are taught to think about our historical heroes, as if they have to have an image that fits how certain people want them to be remembered.

"For instance, it's widely thought Lord Nelson was blind in one eye but today he would probably be thought of as a benefits fraudster. He was injured for a few days but he actually played up the significance of it to try to win a military pension, and he never actually wore a patch.

"It was only when he lost his arm in battle that he got the pension, and for the rest of his life he went around saying he didn't have a problem with his eye at all."

The name of the book – What Needled Cleopatra – refers to the myth that the Egyptian queen was not only one of the great beauties of her age, but of all time. But according to an ancient coin discovered two years ago in Newcastle that showed her to have a sharp nose, pointed chin and big mouth, she was anything but.

The book also explains how America's first president George Washington was lauded for refusing to accept a salary during his eight-year tenure as commander of the Continental Army during the War of Independence, which would have netted him $48,000.

Instead he 'merely' asked to be paid in expenses, which worked out at a massive $447,220 – about $9 million in today's values.

The book is the follow-up to Napoleon's Haemorrhoids… and Other Small Events that Changed History, which proved so popular it was recently released in paperback.

Mr Mason said: "Some people tend to think history is a given but actually it's the way we remember it that is the interesting filter.

"That's what makes it so fascinating to me, rather than it being the rather dry subject we think about from school."

• ***What Needled Cleopatra is available through JR Books, priced £12.99.***

Officer injured in police car crash

A POLICE officer who suffered life-threatening chest injuries in a car crash in Southborough is in a "stable and improving" condition at a London hospital.

The officer, who has not been named, had been responding to an emergency call in a marked police car when the incident took place on the A26 London Road at about 2.10pm on Monday. The patrol car was heading towards Tunbridge Wells when it collided with a Mitsubishi Colt car, before hitting two parked cars and careering into a brick wall.

The serious collision investigation unit has appealed for anyone who saw the cars in the area before the incident or who witnessed the collision to call 01622 798538.

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Addict jailed for a string of burglaries

HEROIN addict Ronald Hearn has been sentenced to two years in prison after admitting to more than 40 burglaries across Kent.

The 44-year-old, previously of Herne Bay, Gillingham and Rochester, was sentenced at Canterbury Crown Court this week.

He had earlier admitted to breaking into a home in Shakespeare Road, Birchington, in October, 2008, and stealing golf clubs, alcohol and ornaments. His DNA had been found on a hammer left at the scene.

Hearn also admitted taking a silver platter from a house in Beacon Hill, Herne Bay, in September, 2008. The platter was later recovered at the home of his girlfriend.

Officers caught up with Hearn in Plumstead, London, and returned him to Canterbury for questioning.

He admitted a string of offences he had committed to fund his heroin addiction, taking police officers on a tour of east Kent identifying properties he had broken into.

Anxiety

Hearn targeted homes in Ramsgate, Margate, Birchington, Westgate-on-Sea, Herne Bay, Whitstable, Canterbury and Rochester, stealing £65,000 of luxury goods ranging from jewellery to computer and camera equipment.

Many of the homes were broken into through windows, and side and rear doors.

He even broke into a health and beauty business in Whitstable, taking facial products and cash.

Hearn asked for all these offences and others committed in Sussex to be taken into consideration.

Det Con John Daly, who investigated the burglaries, said: "These burglaries caused a great deal of upset and anxiety to those whose homes were broken into and were purely motivated by Ronald Hearn's addiction to heroin. It seems that he has stopped using drugs and we can only hope this continues and that he has, as indicated, turned his life around."

JAILED: Ronald Hearn stole for drugs

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Branch out this Christmas

PAT CRAWFORD of Hadlow College offers expert tips for making the best of your festive foliage

BELLS AND THISTLES: Christmas just isn't Christmas without the festive tree

A TREE is so much part of the festive season that it's difficult to imagine Christmas without it.

But a decorated tree, the hanging of mistletoe and the burning of a yule log all owe their existence to our pagan ancestors, long before the celebration of Christ's birth.

The custom of putting up a Christmas tree certainly existed some 400 years ago and, by the early 19th century, European royal courts and noble families had taken up the idea.

A Christmas tree was part of the festivities for Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and their children at Windsor Castle and this inspired the modern British tradition.

A 'Christmas tree' can be one of many species. Varieties of fir have become especially popular lately because, unlike the traditional Norway Spruce, they don't shed their needles as they dry out.

Matthew Archer, manager of Hadlow College's Broadview Centre, favours UK-grown Nordmann firs: "I prefer to stock trees that are grown in this country because it is a far more sustainable practice than buying imported trees. Furthermore, it is good for the UK's rural economy."

Matthew's top tip when buying is: "Look at the shape of the tree and the colour – don't buy anything that is already shedding needles or looking tired."

Alex Rennie, Hadlow's head gardener, said a common fault in selecting a tree relates to size.

He said: "People often want a tall tree that reaches nearly to the ceiling, but they don't consider the width. The taller the tree, the more width space it will require."

Both agree it is a good idea to buy a rooted tree for growing on, longevity and possible reuse, but Matthew added: "The majority of trees that have been kept in a hot room for several days are unlikely to survive."

Alex said: "A gorgeously decked Christmas tree looks particularly good placed in a corner near a log fire but that or close to a radiator or other form of heat, is the worst possible position from the perspective of the tree's survival.

"Anyone wanting to grow on a rooted tree should consider placing it in a cool porch or, even better, outside in the garden."

On prolonging the appearance of an unrooted tree, Alex said: "Treat a cut tree like a cut flower. Saw off an inch or more from the base of the trunk. Then immerse the tree in water for two or three hours. This will help to prevent the tree drying out."

Petty issues fail to spoil panto fun for Laura

CINDERELLA has been a huge hit at the Orchard Theatre in Dartford since opening on December 5, despite the odd wardrobe malfunction.

Laura Evans plays the heroine in the spectacular pantomime and the cast have been delighting audiences with this magical family show in the build-up to Christmas.

But unexpected and funny events can occur at any time, much to the delight of the audience.

"One night I walked into a ball scene with half my dress tucked up under my petticoat," said Evans. "One of the dancers had to pull it down. It was quite funny because I was supposed to be this elegant princess."

The cast also features Lesley Joseph as the Fairy Godmother and Matt Slack as Buttons who, as Evans revealed, can always be relied upon for a few impromptu gags.

But everything has gone according to plan so far, even Cinderella's tricky waltz with Prince Charming.

"The dance went fine," she said. "I even learned how to dance while holding my dress up."

One cast member proving particularly popular with audiences is Churchill, the TV insurance dog.

"The audience find him quite funny," said Evans. "He has his own little scene and he gets a few laughs. Everyone seems to have taken to him."

With a few more weeks of performances ahead of them, the cast are taking great care to ensure every show is just as good as the last.

"Now we're into the swing of it, it's really good fun," Evans said. "We're getting used to doing two shows a day. We come in with our coffees and vitamins every morning, as we're all paranoid we're going to get ill, but we've been fine so far."

• ***Cinderella runs at the Orchard Theatre in Dartford until Sunday, January 10. To book tickets call the box office on 01322 220000 or visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk.***

HEROINE: Laura Evans

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Seasonings greetings, one and all

With last-minute Christmas preparations in full swing, RACHEL McATHY finds out how to make the most of top local produce with special festive recipes

CHRISTMAS is just days away – the last of the decorations are being put up, presents are being wrapped and the fridge is fit to burst with seasonal treats.

With less than a week left to plan the big day, we have compiled the ultimate Christmas banquet, using locally sourced ingredients.

Every course is catered for, with a Christmas starter, main and dessert, as well as the secret to perfect stuffing.

Each recipe features an array of local produce, from vegetables, meats and game, to nuts, wines and dairy. To start is a delicious winter warmer soup, featuring Christmas favourite the chestnut, paired with Kentish mushrooms.

For the main meal, turkey has been replaced by succulent pheasant, cooked with spicy chorizo for a Spanish twist.

Finish off the festive feast with a mouth-watering dessert of tiramisu, made with Kentish cobnuts.

So using ingredients grown and reared here in the county, you can be rest assured that feeding the family this Christmas can be both stress-free and absolutely delicious. Merry Christmas from everyone at foodforkent.co.uk and KOS Media.

Chestnut and Mushroom Soup

Preparation time: 10 minutes
Cooking time: 35 minutes
Serves: 6

2 tsps Chapel Press rapeseed Oil
1 onion, finely chopped
1 carrot, chopped
350g mushrooms, sliced
175g peeled roasted chestnuts
2 litres vegetable stock
2 tbsps chopped fresh parsley
100g Hinxden Dairy creme fraiche
salt and freshly ground black pepper

Heat the oil in a large saucepan and sauté the onion, carrot and mushrooms until softened, about 5 minutes. Sprinkle in the flour and continue to sauté for a couple more minutes.

Add the chestnuts and then gradually add vegetable stock to the saucepan and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 20 minutes.

Transfer the soup to a liquidiser or food processor and add the parsley and most of the creme fraiche. Blend for about 15-20 minutes until smooth, then return to the saucepan.

Taste and season the soup, then serve in warmed bowls, garnished with the reserved fromage frais and parsley sprigs.

• Cook's note: to roast chestnuts, pierce them with a sharp knife on the flat side, then roast them on a baking sheet in an oven preheated to gas mark 6/200C/400F for 15-20 minutes

JUST DESSERT: Cobnut Tiramisu topped with cocoa powder

Pot Roast Kentish Pheasant with a Spanish Twist

Preparation Time: 10 minutes
Cooking time: 180 minutes
Serves: 6
2 Mersham Hatch pheasants
1 knob of Nederland butter
3 tbsp Chapel Press rapeseed oil
4 cloves garlic
4 sprigs thyme
2 bay leaves
salt and pepper
200g chorizo
300ml Chapel Down white wine
500ml stock
1 handful chopped parsley
2 onions

Place a large casserole dish over a medium heat, add the butter and a tablespoon of the Chapel Press rapeseed oil. Add the onions (peeled and finely sliced), the garlic, thyme and bay leaves. Cook for about 10 minutes until soft and golden, stirring regularly. Meanwhile, set a large frying pan over a high heat and add two tablespoons of rapeseed oil. Brown the pheasants on all sides for a few minutes, then transfer to the casserole. Add the chorizo (outer skin removed and chopped into chunks). Fry for a few minutes then add to the casserole.

Deglaze the frying pan with a little of the wine, add that to the casserole along with the remaining wine, stock. Bring to a simmer, cover and then move to a pre-heated oven at 170C or 325F, gas mark 3. Cook for about two hours.

Remove the pheasants from the pan and set aside in a warm place. Skim off any excess fat. Add the parsley and season to taste. Carve the birds into manageable pieces onto warmed plates and spoon over the chorizo and sauce. Serve with mashed potatoes and/or bread.

Kentish Christmas Stuffing

Preparation Time: 25 minutes
Cooking time: 15 minutes
Serves: 10

50g Nederland butter
200g onions, peeled & chopped
100g celery, roughly chopped
225g Cumberland sausage, skinned
2 rashers local bacon – thinly chopped
100g brown breadcrumbs
4 tbsps chopped fresh parsley
4 tsps chopped fresh thyme
50g Kentish cobnuts
salt and pepper

Slice up the bacon, onion and celery. Melt the butter in a frying pan and add the bacon, onion and celery – you're not looking to cook it, just fry it off for a few minutes. Meanwhile put the breadcrumbs, herbs and nuts into a food processor (here is where you can experiment, add some different types of nuts or herbs, thyme works well, it's really down to what you have to hand). Add the bacon onion mix and blend with a couple of whizzes of the processor.

Now you can either stuff the bird or place on a baking tray for 45 minutes until crisp.

Cobnut Tiramisu (from Alex Hunt at Potash Farm)

Preparation: 1 hour, plus 2-3 hours chilling (or overnight)
Cooking time: 20 minutes
Number of servings: 8-10

1 tsp vanilla extract
3 egg yolks
50g caster sugar
pinch of salt
250g mascarpone
250g double cream
100g shelled cobnuts, roughly chopped
300ml cold espresso coffee
4 tbsp hazelnut or coffee liqueur
250g sponge fingers
cocoa powder, for sprinkling

Put the vanilla, egg yolks, caster sugar and salt in a heatproof bowl and place over a pan of steaming hot water. Beat with electric whisk until the mixture is thick and creamy. Then remove the bowl from over the pan and continue whisking until the mixture is cool and thick.

Beat the mascarpone in a separate bowl until soft and then fold it into the egg mixture. In another large bowl whip the cream and then fold it into the egg mixture.

Heat a non-stick pan on top of the stove. When hot, add the cobnuts and toast, stirring constantly, for 5-6 minutes until the nuts are fragrant. Remove from the pan and leave to cool.

Mix the coffee and liqueur together in a high-sided dish. Dip the sponge fingers into the coffee mixture one at a time and lay in the bottom of a glass serving dish. Sprinkle over some of the toasted cobnuts, then spoon over some of the cream and smooth over the surface.

Repeat the layers with the coffee-soaked sponge fingers, nuts and cream until all the cream is used up. Smooth the final layer of cream, dust with cocoa powder and sprinkle over the remaining nuts. Place in the fridge for at least 2-3 hours prior to serving. Can also be made in individual glass bowls.

Plenty of time to sample Christmas market treats

DELICIOUS winter treats are in store for visitors to Westwood Cross shopping centre in Thanet until Wednesday, December 23.

The centre has been hosting a Christmas market for the last month which runs for just a few more days.

One trader, Ems Cupcakes, will offer festive nibbles, liqueur and gifts, which can be ordered anywhere in Thanet.

For directions, visit www.westwoodx.co.uk

Say cheese and you'll be in very good company

FRANCE is famous for it, but Kent cheese is among the best around. Now you can see for yourself exactly how it is made at the Cheesemakers of Canterbury.

Two days of tasting will take place on Monday and Tuesday, December 21 and 22, where other local produce will also be available to sample with a glass of mulled wine or cider.

Both days run from 10am to 4pm.

foodforkent.co.uk We are committed to adding more local suppliers to our online service and any local business or producer that wishes to join our campaign should contact us at foodforkent.co.uk or email us at feedback@kosmedia.co.uk

THE PERFECT LOCAL CHRISTMAS IS JUST A CLICK AWAY

Buy your local Christmas produce online and get **£10 off** your shopping + **FREE delivery for every reader***

foodforkent.co.uk

GO GREEN... ORDER FRESH LOCAL PRODUCE ONLINE

Offer valid for Christmas pre orders over £100 between now and 23rd December.
Deliveries will be between 21st - 25th December as convenient.
Type in promocode "**KOSTEN**" at checkout.

KENT ON SUNDAY

COMMENT

Enjoy loved ones this festive season

THAT festive time of year has crept up on us again with office parties, family gatherings and excessive food and drink.

It's also a time when people often reflect on those less fortunate than themselves, and this year much-loved actress Joanna Lumley is making a special plea to readers.

The Ab Fab star is trying to raise money for those Gurkha veterans who fought for this country in World War Two but now live, forgotten, in poverty in Nepal.

It follows her tough campaign to change Government immigration policy so former Gurkha soldiers could settle in the UK.

Her campaigning brings home the lengths that some people are willing to go for others and makes us realise that if we all dig that little bit deeper, many lives can be changed for the better.

Perhaps we should all take a leaf out of Ms Lumley's book and think about those less fortunate, not just at Christmas, but through the whole year.

And with family and friends in abundance over the festive period, it does make us think about those away from their loved ones, like our soldiers on the front line.

The deaths of so many soldiers this year – including two from Kent in the past month – have brought home the reality and misery of war.

So for those lucky enough to be surrounded by their loved ones this Christmas, don't take it for granted, but enjoy every second.

Everyone at Kent on Sunday would like to wish all our readers and advertisers a very Merry Christmas.

OPINION: Conflict in Afghanistan

The Taliban-led insurgents will succeed only if we lose our resolve, says Defence Secretary BOB AINSWORTH

MORE than 100 UK troops have been killed this year in Afghanistan. Each death is a personal tragedy for the families, friends and comrades of those killed.

I understand the strength of public feeling back in the UK when confronted with the reality of the fighting in Afghanistan. Progress has come at a heavy human cost. People rightly ask – is it worth it?

The NATO mission in Afghanistan is a conflict of necessity, not of choice.

It is vital to the national security of the UK. British forces are fighting as part of a coalition of more than 40 nations because they too have made the same judgement for their national security.

We are in Afghanistan because the Taliban gave safe haven to the terrorists of Al Qaeda, who helped plan and carry out attacks around the world, including the atrocities of 9/11.

Sixty-seven British citizens died in those attacks, when almost 3,000 innocent people from 90 countries lost their lives.

Getting rid of the brutal Taliban regime in 2001 was only the first part of the job.

The second is to make sure that Al Qaeda cannot return to Afghanistan and use it to plan and direct further atrocities.

When the Afghans themselves are strong enough to deny the territory of Afghanistan as a base for terrorists, then our troops can come home. That's why the focus on training Afghan troops and police is so important.

Ninety per cent of ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) operations are carried out in conjunction with the Afghan army and they are starting to lead independent operations. Some 223 Afghan military and police were killed in action in August and September alone.

From the military point of view, we have taken essential steps this summer.

In the south, the centre of the insurgency, the inflow of thousands of additional US, UK and other NATO troops has enabled the Afghan Government to extend its authority around the main population centres. Across Helmand province, UK, US, Danish, Estonian and Afghan forces have had a major impact on the insurgency.

The vast majority of Afghans do not want the Taliban back. They want security and to be able to get on with their lives. So progress is not just measured in insurgents killed or captured but in how far life is improving.

In Helmand, 63 schools have opened in the last 11 months.

Only a comprehensive approach that marries security to development and governance will meet our objectives in Afghanistan.

The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary have set out our political strategy and the essential steps required by the Afghan Government.

The commitment of President Karzai to reach out to his opponents to promote national reconciliation, to strengthen the Afghan security forces and to stamp down on corruption is crucial.

The new UK force level of 9,500 that we have set out is part of a wider commitment by the alliance on both strategy and delivery. The commitment decision by the United States and other NATO countries to bolster the political strategy with extra troops is a demonstration of our collective resolve.

Some argue that our presence in Afghanistan gives a boost to violent extremism around the world, but the greatest boost to their vicious ideology would be for us to retreat now.

So we must maintain momentum and get the job done. This will not happen overnight – more lives will be lost and some of them will be British lives.

But we cannot afford to be half-hearted in Afghanistan – and neither can we afford to be so here at home.

Our forces in the field risking life and limb deserve our support. All parties in the House of Commons are united behind our troops.

The Taliban-led insurgents cannot defeat NATO in the field. They will succeed only if we lose our resolve.

We must not. We will not.

A tale of one city

Medway is worthy of city status and 2012 would be the ideal time for our community to receive the recognition it deserves. In fact we have great expectations for 2012 in Medway.

It will be a year of celebration. It is Charles Dickens' bicentenary and with our historic ties to that great Victorian writer, we will certainly mark the occasion.

We will also be celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Royal Engineers' arrival in Chatham – another opportunity to show our respect and appreciation to those who fight and die for our country.

All eyes will be on Britain in 2012 as London hosts the Olympic and Paralympic Games, and Medway is well positioned to benefit from this.

It is hoped that our series of cultural and sporting events will culminate in the Chatham Historic Dockyard receiving World Heritage Status.

Importantly it is also the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and it is customary for the monarch to mark such special occasions by bestowing city status and Medway will certainly seek this, as we did in 2000 and 2002.

Medway is already a city in all but name. It has the largest conurbation in the South East and is being transformed by ongoing regeneration projects, which is creating jobs and bringing new business opportunities.

This will not alter the character of our towns, for it would be five towns within a city – preserving each town's uniqueness whilst bringing us together to establish Medway on the map. What better way to complement our year of celebration?

Cllr Howard Doe,
portfolio holder for Community Services,
member for Rainham South

Tragedy of east/west divide

I think KoS is an excellent paper, sharing news and information from around and about Kent.

However, what is more than apparent, through your own articles and from stories on economics, jobs, prosperity and such like is the continuing disparity that exists between the east and west of the county.

For far too long, the more prosperous west (especially Tunbridge Wells, Bromley, Sevenoaks, Maidstone and West Malling for example) has remained economically buoyant, even in these difficult times, compared to the east, specifically the coastal regions of Folkestone, Dover, Margate and Ramsgate.

Your articles continue to highlight this gap between relatively affluent, commuter belt towns where the pull of London's prosperity overspills to the hinterland, and the higher levels of unemployment, social and economic deprivation found in Kent's coastal regions. Years of neglect and underfunding have taken their toll.

Although we cannot return to the hey-days of the coastal towns, when they were smart tourist destinations in their own right, more must be done both at a local, county and national level to regenerate these forgotten resorts.

Art and creativity may help to bring investment and people in (eg, Creative Quarter, Folkestone), but this alone will not return these towns to their glory. I don't know what will, but I desperately hope the long-awaited full introduction of the high-speed train service will put this part of the county back on the map and show there is life beyond Maidstone.

Rob Ryan, Folkestone

We were misled, again

So Kent County Council bosses have written off any chance of recouping £2.7 million out of the £50m they invested in Icelandic banks. John Simmonds, cabinet member for finance at KCC, has admitted he does not expect the council to be repaid this money, lost in October last year.

In total, more than £30m of taxpayers' money was lost when banks Landisbanki, Glitnir and Heritable all collapsed, as well as a further £16m from the council pension fund, and £1m from the fire service.

When the Lib Dems raised this issue during the county council election campaign we were confidently told by the Tories that Kent taxpayers would get all the money back. Now further cuts will be made to vital council services. Once again the Conservatives had led the voters up the garden path with their empty promises.

Dr Alan Bullion, Liberal Democrat
parliamentary candidate
for Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells

You can picture them

With nativity plays in full swing, parents should know that common sense can prevail when it comes to taking photographs of school children ('School photo paranoia totally out of control' December 6).

The Data Protection Act does not prevent parents taking photos of their children and friends participating in school events for personal use. So it is perfectly acceptable for parents to take photos of their children and friends performing in school plays or other events for the family album.

While we understand the caution some schools take, sometimes organisations misunderstand the law. The Act plays a very important role in safeguarding our personal information and the Information Commissioner's Office has clear guidance about photography in schools.

See www.ico.gov.uk for more details.

Jonathan Bamford,
Assistant Information Commissioner,
Information Commissioner's Office

Keep Christmas green

With many households suffering job losses or shorter working hours, it is worth considering how to keep costs down at Christmas but spirits up. Here are a few examples:

- Make your own decorations from what would otherwise be thrown away: silver and gold foil coffee packets make wonderful stars.
- Don't give cut flowers, give living plants.
- Decorate a living tree in your own garden instead of buying one.
- If you must use wrapping paper, try to undo presents without ruining it and keep it for next year.
- Send e-cards or make your own from last year's cards and recycle them afterwards.
- Combine leftovers into a new dish – there is a long tradition of turkey curry.
- Above all try to minimise waste. If you don't know what to buy someone, ask. If the new jumper doesn't fit, give it to a charity shop or your local Freecycle scheme.

Dr Hazel Dawe, Kent Green Party

Letters continued on page 26

YOUR LETTERS

KOS Media welcomes your comments and letters for publication. Please send correspondence to: Letters to the Editor, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR. Alternatively fax them to: 01303 817002, or email them to editorial@kosmedia.co.uk. Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances. Please also include a daytime telephone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit letters.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS

Including family announcements in partnership with the Kent registration service

To register Births, Marriages and Deaths contact the Kent registration service on 0845 824 7400
For advertising announcement enquiries telephone Kent on Sunday on 01303 817150

BIRTHS

BAKER
Ryan Lewis born on 8th December 2009, weighing 5lbs 8oz. Son to Victoria and Peter in Maidstone.

BRUNSDON
Mark and Jane of Deal are delighted to announce the birth of their son Harry James Mark Brunsdon, born at home on 4th December 2009. Our most beautiful and precious son.

CAGLAR
Evren and Anna of Nonington are pleased to announce the birth of their baby boy Tan Ilya Caglar on the 29th November 2009 at Kent and Canterbury Hospital

CEGLEDI
Lucas Robert Cegledi born on 3rd December 2009, weighing 8lbs 9ozs. Son to Alice and Brian in Broadstairs

CHANCE
Simon and Tina are proud to announce the birth of their two beautiful and precious little miracles, Mckenzie and Anneliese, born on 27th November 2009 at Pembury Hospital

CLUBB
Cally born on 9th December 2009,weighing 6lbs 11ozs. Daughter to Samantha and Daniel. You are the miracle who we will love and treasure forever.

CURTIS
Liana Sue Curtis, born 06-11-2009 at William Harvey Hospital weighing 6lbs 14ozs. Proud parents Paul and Gemma.

FRANCIS
Finley James Francis born on 10th November 2009 weighing 7lb 11oz . First child to proud parents Daniel and Suzy. Welcome to the world xx

KHADKA
Denisha born on 19th November 2009, weighing 8lbs 1oz. Daughter to Dinesh and Sangita Khadka in Maidstone.

KNAVES
Vicki and Justin are thrilled with the unexpected arrival of their baby boy Jorge Leon Tom Knaves. Proud Grandparents are Christine, Stephen, Julie and Perri. Here just in time for Christmas.

LAWRENCE
Harry James born on 25th November 2009, weighing 7lbs 9oz. Son to Gemma and Michael in Maidstone.

LONG
Patrik Aiden weighing 6lbs 14oz and Danyl James weighing 6lbs 8oz born on 4th December 2009. Sons to Darren and Lynne Long in Maidstone.

MCGUIGAN
Chris and Gemma of Margate are delighted to announce the birth of their son Riley David, born on 9th December 2009 at QEQM. You are the miracle who we will love and treasure forever.

NEAL
Mark and Jennifer Neal celebrate the birth of their son Thomas Benjamin Colin Neal on 12th November 2009.

O CALLAGHAN
Laura and Darren of Ramsgate are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter Jessica Anne, born on 27th November 2009 at QEQM Hospital. Our most beautiful and precious daughter.

RILEY
Emma and James of Herne Bay are delighted to announce the birth of their beautiful daughter, Jade Emma , on 25 November 2009 at 11.58 weighing 4Ib 13oz.

SHEPPARD
Linda and Douglas of Deal are delighted to announce the birth of their son Sam Douglas Sheppard, born on 19th November 2009 at QEQM Hospital. Brother to Erin.

WEST
Shez and Nick of Margate are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter Leah Kerry West, born on 6th December 2009 at QEQM Hospital. Sister for Skye and Hayden.

WRIGHT
Albie Christopher born on the 6th of December 2009, weighing 8lbs 4ozs. Son to Lisa and Jay Wright of Dover.

DEATHS

ACKEHURST
Naomi Ackehurst of Canterbury passed away peacefully on 10th December 2009. A dearly loved mother, grandmother and great grandmother who will be very sadly missed.

BLANCHETT
Deborah Blanchett of Dartford died peacefully on 12th December 2009. Funeral Service at Medway Crematorium Bluebell hill at 2pm on 29th December 2009.

CAINE
Joyce Rose Caine beloved wife of Richard, mother of Michael, Jacqueline and Paul who passed away on the 9th December 2009. Funeral Service at Charring Crematorium on Wednesday 23rd December at 2.40pm. Flowers or donations to Tenterden Disabled in Action all enquiries to A. W. Court Funeral Directors.

COTTAM
Kathleen Cottam passed away on Sunday 6th December aged 100 years. Her funeral is to be held at the Medway Crematorium on Tuesday 29th December at 11am. Flowers, if desired, to the Co-operative Undertakers Gravesend

EFFORD
Benita Evlina Efford passed away on 5th December 2009. Dearly loved by her son Keith, daughter in law Jennifer and Grandchildren Michaela and Natasha.

EVANS
Major Arthur John Evans RE Retd passed away suddenly on the 9th December 2009 aged 78 years

GODWIN
Roger Godwin of Maidstone passed away on the 9th December 2009. Enquiries to The Co-Operative Funeralcare 01622 753033.

HARRIS
Jean Anne Harris. 9 August 1937 - 8 December 2009. Much Beloved Mum, Sister, Nan and Auntie. God Bless. Service to be held at Barham Crematorium 11.20am, Wednesday 23rd December.

HART
Allen Hart of Herne Bay and formerly Headmaster of Swalecliffe Primary School died peacefully at home on 9th December 2009. Beloved husband of Joyce. He will be sadly missed by family and friends. All enquiries to Welch and Sons Herne Bay.

HOLMES
Mary (Elsie Mary) Holmes of Walmer passed away on 13th December 2009. A much loved mum and grandma who will be very sadly missed by all who knew her. Please contact A Welch and Sons Ltd regarding Marys funeral - 01227 7878012 .

KENNEY
Albert Louis William Kenney of Burham passed away peacefully after a long illness on 3rd December 2009, aged 71.

MACARTHUR
George MacArthur passed away peacefully on the 11th December 2009. All enquiries to Michael Lawrence Funeral Service on 01622 725704.

TRILL
Dr John Trill FCIOB 4th July 1931 to 9th December 2009. With deep sadness we announce the death of John Trill. A devoted husband, father and grandfather, he will be greatly missed and fondly remembered always. Cremation Tuesday 22nd December at Vinters Park Crematorium at 2.45pm.

WALLOND
George Wallond passed away suddenly on the 4th December 2009. Sadly missed by family and friends.

WICKENS
Christine Mary Wickens died peacefully on 11th December 2009. Dearly loved mother of Robert and Steven. Funeral service at Vinters Park Crematorium at 3.30pm on Tuesday 22nd December. Family flowers only, but donations may be made to The Heart of Kent Hospice, Aylesford.

In Memory of Robert Meek
27/09/28 - 11/11/09
Thank you so much to family, friends, Doves funeral directors and especially the AMF Bowling Alley, Maidstone for their support & kindness. Also for all the flower tributes and donations for the Heart Foundation.
From June Rangan (Roberts sister)

Letters continued from page 25

You wouldn't credit it

As your readers go about their Christmas shopping, I am writing to warn about the dangers of unsolicited consumer credit.

This has become increasingly prevalent in the age of online shopping.

Some stores use details given by shoppers to open accounts, but the accounts bring with them a credit facility which has not been specifically asked for. You give your details so they can bill you, and an account is opened in your name with a 'generous' amount of credit attached. This can happen even if you are paying instantly with your credit card. I have been trying to call the stores to account and have discussed this with the chief executive of the Financial Services Authority.

I will soon be taking it up with the Office of Fair Trading but need more information from people who have been affected.

If any readers has been signed onto a credit account without their consent, I would be pleased if they could get in touch with me by email at info@sharonbowles.org.uk.

I am also collecting information about adverts where there is headline information, such as a tempting interest rate, accompanied by less conspicuous information concerning special conditions that need to be fulfilled. If you have been taken in or confused, please let me know.

Sharon Bowles MEP,
European Parliament Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee chair

Fast track to let-down

Having seen the new timetables for Southeastern trains from Folkestone and east Kent to and from London, it appears all the consultations were a sham as they have obviously not taken people's concerns and wishes into account.

They will will be running just two very slow 'classic' services, stopping everywhere, thus taking one hour and 40-45 minutes to and from Charing Cross, Monday to Friday, and only one of those on a Saturday, along with another price hike from January, as well as the exorbitant fares to use the St Pancras line anyway. This instead of the current 'fast' train of about 80 minutes and a slower 90 minute one.

Indeed, on the radio people were complaining about the timetable, one saying she will save just 10 minutes even if using the new line and the Underground. This has been done to force people onto the new line which neither I, nor I suspect many others, find useful or acceptable, even if the trains are better overall. This was raised at the meetings but clearly ignored.

I find Charing Cross far more convenient, and occasionally London Bridge, than St Pancras. It's more convenient to go to Charing Cross for visiting the shops, museums, galleries and cinemas than St Pancras could ever be. Southeastern claims people can walk from St Pancras to the centre of London in about 20 minutes or so but this would require speed-walking. Recent reports suggest people are having to psyche themselves up to get on the now dangerously overcrowded Tube or the very often gridlocked London buses. So neither being reasonable alternatives most of the time.

So we are left with the false 'choice' of either very fast or very slow which cannot be acceptable, especially given all the price hikes – which should have been reductions.

If they had turned one of the 'classic' services to a semi-fast, maybe with just two or three extra stops, that would have been more acceptable. But no, they couldn't be bothered, being more interested in their own pockets than providing a decent service.

Finally, none of this is going to get people out of their cars to help tackle climate change. With the talks in Copenhagen heading towards a fudge, it's even more impotant to push strongly for more action. The railways brought prosperity to both Kent and the world in the 19th century. Thus a second age of the train, with prices and service levels people can accept, is surely the way forward. I suggest turning all Britain's railways into a social enterprise structure under a renamed Network Rail, so we can all be stakeholders, along with reversing the Government's reducing investment and subsidies policy. I suspect more people would rather this continuing with the privatised version which, as we've seen with the east coast main line, is a failure all round.

Ray Duff, Folkestone

Giving birth to fear

It is 7am on Monday, December 14, and I have just spent a very restless night, unable to get Amanda Holden's ITV show, Out Of My Depth, out of my head.

While I accept the hospital and staff concerned had no control over the editing, I am appalled and ashamed they did not anticipate the potential outcome of such a programme and only allow positive filming, rather than – once again – turning childbirth on TV into a dangerous life event that women need saving from.

I understood the role of consultant midwife was to promote normal birth, not perpetuate the medical model. Having taken part in TV programmes myself (such as Home Birth Diaries on Discovery Health), I have no issue with them as such as they can be a wonderful source of education. However, according to my midwives' rules, I have a duty of care to all women and that includes how I go about portraying and promoting childbirth.

In every respected midwifery book available, the profession is familiar with disempowerment and the dangers of the cascade of intervention is highlighted.

Student midwives learn about it on a daily basis and are encouraged not to implement it. The medical model of childbirth demonstrates that a woman is put into a hospital gown, laid on a bed, becomes distressed and asks for a epidural.

Due to the epidural the baby has a drop in blood pressure and shows signs of distress, is torn from her body with instruments, is in a short-term bad condition due to the above but, hey presto, the midwife or doctor saves the baby and the woman is grateful.

It is shameful to show that kind of approach on television when so much work is being done to make changes away from the medical model of childbirth.

However, if that is what is normal and usual in most labour wards, then those midwives who accept or promote it should be ashamed. Less than half of childbearing women in this country have normal childbirth, mostly due to being in a medical model of care and the definition of 'normal' when collecting that figure is very loose.

If we use the words physiological or as nature intended, which is the safest way, the figure comes down to half that. How can that be when women are so good at giving birth? How did we survive so many thousands of years if childbirth is so damaging?

Professionals have a lot to answer for because the messages we give are the ones women take on and that show gave a very warped view of childbirth.

In this country, childbirth is a very safe process. Seven in 1,000 babies die and that programme was an hour long. The ratio of time spent talking about death and dying was disproportionate and inappropriate, for no other reason than sensationalism.

With such a high-profile personality, a golden opportunity was available to show normality, promote birth in a positive and empowering way.

Both births attended by Ms Holden showed women on their backs, on beds, in hospital gowns, one baby received unnecessary suction. Why not a home birth, a water birth, a squatting birth, all-fours even? Why not a normal birth?

Ms Holden would have had just as many tears and the message to women would have been different and empowering. I am ashamed of my profession if they think it is all right to tell women childbirth is a dangerous, terrifying event they and their babies have to be saved from, because it's not – and the rest of my career will be spent giving that message.

Virginia Howes,
www.kentmidwiferypractice.co.uk

KENT ON SUNDAY www.propertyforkent.co.uk

Review 20.12.09

He sang Shang-a-Lang

Remember the glory of Rollermania

REVIEW
BY **JANE CONNOLLY**

ROLLERMANIA returns to Kent when Les McKeown relives the good old days.

As the lead singer of 70s pop group Bay City Rollers, McKeown achieved every teenage boy's dream – super stardom, chart-topping hits and hordes of screaming girls wherever he went. Now the ultimate heartthrob is celebrating those golden days with an evening of great songs and nostalgia.

As well as performing the hits that made Bay City Rollers teen pin-ups all over the world, McKeown, 54, will be revisiting songs by the artists that inspired the young Scottish popstars.

"The songs we've picked to go into that section of the show are songs that not only I, but the rest of the band, liked at the time," he said. "Bands like the Beatles were a big influence and people like Frank Sinatra and Elvis Presley."

For five years, McKeown was part of a global phenomenon, storming the charts with hits like Shang-a-Lang, Summer Love Sensation, All of Me Loves All of You and Bye Bye Baby, which became the biggest-selling song of 1975. Hordes of tartan-clad girls clamoured to see them in concert and buy their music, with some sources claiming the band sold as many as 300 million records worldwide.

All that mega-stardom must have seemed an impossible dream for the small boy who discovered a love of singing.

"Since the very beginning I was singing. I used to annoy a lot of people and I started to look at working to get a bit better," he said. "We would listen to the radio on Sunday, all us kids together. There used to be a kids' series called Fireball XL5 and its theme tune was the first thing I ever sang. We had it recorded and my brother was trying to find the recording recently. I might try to recreate that one on stage!"

As he entered his teens, McKeown became ever more determined to perform, no matter what level of success he might reach.

"I was not looking to a career, I just knew I wanted to be on stage for the rest of my life, singing and playing in a band," he said. "Luckily the Government colluded to help me by chucking me out of school at 15 and I didn't finish my education, so I started a new education in rock and roll."

McKeown spotted an advert for a band singer and, through a large amount of bluffing about his previous experience, he managed to land the job fronting a group called Threshold. While performing with the band, he was spotted by Bay City Rollers manager Tam Paton who asked him to audition for the band.

"I had to pass a couple of rigorous tests first. I had to sing in a theatre, just me, with all these people in suits in the shadows... but everybody was quite happy. I got the job and that was the start of our world domination."

At just 18, McKeown became a superstar and subject to the sort of adulation only the Beatles and Elvis Presley had experienced before. The world of celebrity is strewn with the wreckage of young stars unable to cope with sudden fame, so how did this group of young lads cope?

"I suppose we managed pretty well in the early stages because we were quite protected and isolated from other influences," McKeown said.

"It was done for our own protection and also so the manager could have complete control over us. But I enjoyed those days and that's mainly what this show is about. It's not a gritty show about the good and bad. It's about how Rollermania made us feel and how it made the public feel, it's a celebration."

By the age of 23, already a massive star, McKeown left the band to become a solo artist. Over the following decades he enjoyed success in Japan and Germany, before returning to London in 1991 with his theatrical project, the Tartan Army.

"When I left the band, I thought I was immortal. I was keen to develop songwriting and producing skills; all the things I had not had time for or had not been allowed to be involved with," he said.

With his Legendary Bay City Rollers band, McKeown has tourned the world and taken part in the 2005 Once in a Lifetime Tour, alongside David Essex and the Osmonds. He has also performed on the jazz stage at Glastonbury and is exploring new projects that blend music genres. But he is always happy to revisit the pop tunes that made him a star.

"They are happy songs that appealed at a specific time in their life," he said. "I'm glad I was in a band like Bay City Rollers and not one that played doom and gloom. That would be depressing."

• Rollermania can be seen at the Woodville Halls in Gravesend on January 28 and the Orchard Theatre, Dartford, on April 8.

III-VII **KENTISH CHRISTMAS**
There's still time to snap up an exciting gift for that one person who's notoriously difficult to buy for

XII **FOOD AND DRINK**
It would seem the French are unable to let our taste buds down – even when they're a chain

XV-XXI **PROPERTY**
Construction firms will focus on making our homes more green at a conference in the new year

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Gary Wright, Kent On Sunday

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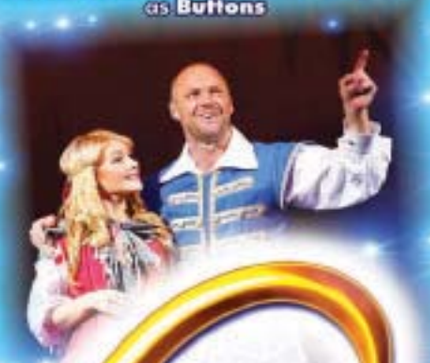

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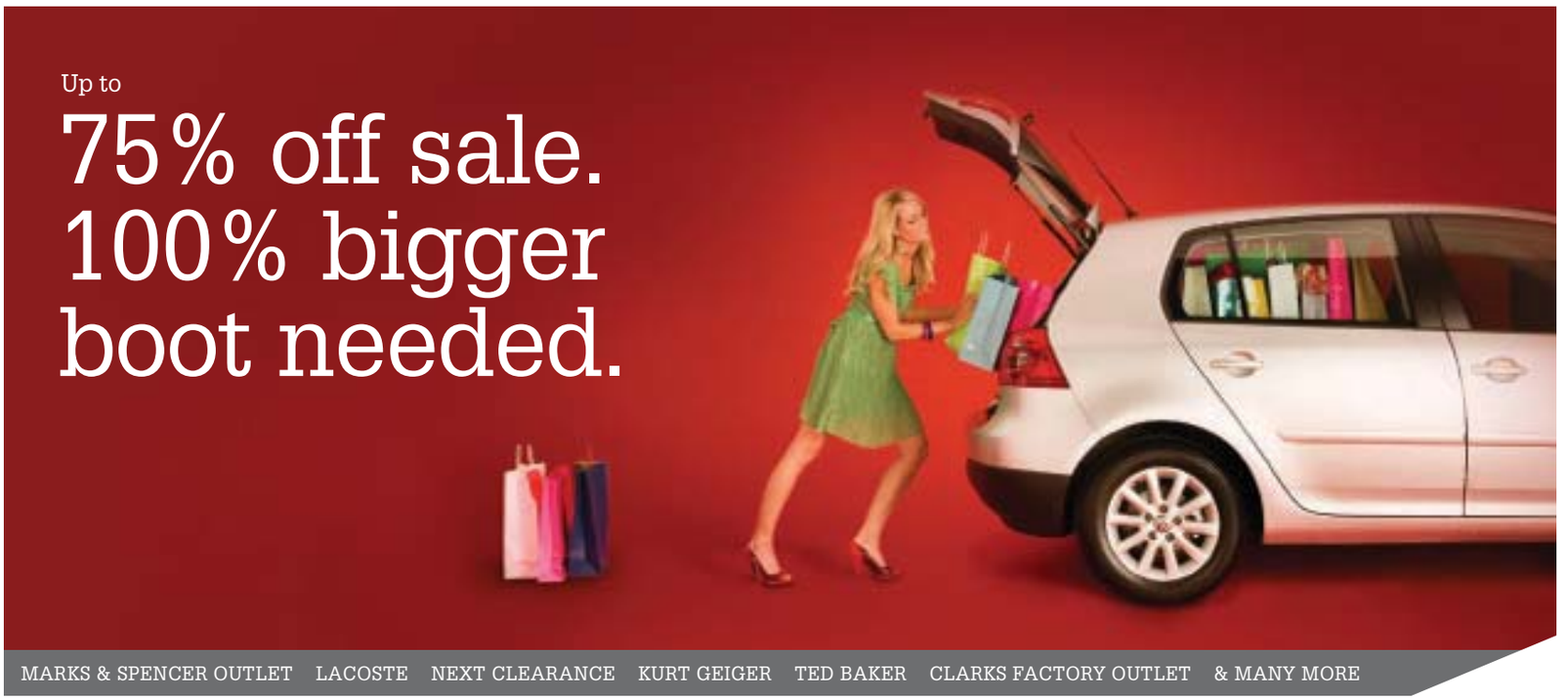
For motorsport fans who are more experienced and would like to take part in full car or bike trackdays, such as the advanced track driving course, vouchers are available in six denominations from £50 to £500.

These vouchers are sent by post in gift packs, whereas taster session vouchers can be printed from the website or posted for an extra charge of £3.

To buy vouchers or simply find out more visit www.clubmsv.co.uk.



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There's more to dinner

FOR a truly sumptuous festive meal, more people are trying alternatives to the traditional turkey.

The John Lewis Foodhall from Waitrose at Bluewater noticed that many customers were keen to try more adventurous dishes as the season of goodwill approached, so the Foodhall's specialists have created The Five Birds of Christmas Guide.

The guide introduces five festive birds – duck, pheasant, goose, partridge and the familiar turkey – with expert tips on trimming, marinating and glazing, as well as stuffing and gravy suggestions.

"Christmas dinner is arguably the most important meal of the year and we want to help our customers make their mark in the kitchen," said Mark Goldberg, meat and fish specialist at the Foodhall. "The secret to a successful Christmas dinner is down to two things: quality ingredients and knowing the best way to prepare and cook them."

Here are a few recipe ideas to help you ring the changes at your Christmas dinner table this year.

• Roast partridge with cranberry and red wine gravy

Two partridges are suitable for two people. Preparation: Remove giblets and trim excess fat or skin. Keep the partridge refrigerated.

Bacon and onion stuffing: Finely chop eight slices of bacon and half a small onion. Mix together in a bowl. Using your fingers, loosen the skin from the breast meat and pack the bacon and onion under the skin of the birds.

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Place the two birds in a roasting tin. Tuck two sprigs of rosemary inside the birds. Dot the skin with 10g of butter. Roast for 40 minutes, or until cooked and the juices run clear. Once cooked, transfer the birds onto serving plates and keep warm.

Cranberry and red wine gravy: Pour the juices from the roasting tin into a small saucepan and add one tablespoon of cranberry jelly and 100ml of red wine. Add 10g of butter and season with salt and pepper.

Cook over a gentle heat and keep stirring until the jelly is dissolved, the sauce is bubbling and has reduced slightly. Strain the gravy through a sieve and serve in a jug.

Serve with a pile of celeriac mash and seasonal vegetables.

• Pheasant breast with apples and crème fraîche

Two pheasant breasts are suitable for two people. Preparation: Trim any excess fat, wash the pheasants in cold water and keep refrigerated.

Pour one tablespoon of olive oil into a small heavy-based frying pan and place over a high heat. Season the pheasant breasts with salt and pepper and place in the pan. Cook for two to three minutes on each side or until cooked through and browned.

Set aside on a plate to rest for five minutes, covering with foil to keep warm.

Apples and crème fraîche: Peel and core one small English Royal Gala apple and cut into 12 wedges. Place the wedges in the pan and cook for one minute on each side or until golden brown. Add 100ml chicken stock and cook for five minutes or until the sauce reduces by about two thirds and the apple is tender. Turn the heat down and then stir in two tablespoons of crème fraîche and two of finely chopped, fresh parsley. Season with salt and pepper.

Cut the pheasant breasts into four or five diagonal slices and return to the pan, with any juices, to warm through.

Serve with a side of seasoned red cabbage.

• Roasted duck fillets with marmalade and chilli glaze

Four fillets are suitable for four. Preparation: Marinate the duck for 30 minutes in the glaze. This is made with the juice from half an orange. Mix with four tablespoons of marmalade, a pinch of chilli flakes and one teaspoon of sherry vinegar. Season with salt and pepper.

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than turkey and sprouts

BEAUTIFUL BIRDS: Meat and fish specialist Mark Goldberg has some tips for making a change to your traditional Christmas dinner

Place the duck on a baking tray lined with parchment paper. Score the flesh with a criss-cross pattern. Spread the glaze over the top liberally. Cut half an orange into four segments and arrange around the duck.

Cooking guidelines: Preheat the oven to 190°C and roast for around 30 minutes. Baste the duck and orange wedges with the glaze a couple of times during the cooking time.

Place the duck and orange wedges on two plates, drizzle with the glaze and serve with lightly steamed kale or green vegetables.

• Roasted goose with prune and apple stuffing

A six kilo goose is suitable for a family of eight. Preparation: Rinse the goose under cold water and pat dry.

Prune and apple stuffing: Chop 250g soft d'Agne prunes and 100g apricots to the size of raisins. Tip into a bowl and pour over 100ml of Armagnac or Calvados. Cover with cling film and then leave to soak overnight.

Add one finely chopped onion, two peeled, cored and diced Bramley apples, half a teaspoon of ground cloves and half a teaspoon of freshly grated nutmeg to the dried fruit. Mix together and add salt and pepper.

Apricot and almond sausage meat stuffing: Place 450g of apricot and almond sausage meat stuffing into a bowl and season.

Stuffing the goose: Fill the smaller neck cavity with the apricot and almond sausage meat stuffing. Then spoon the prune and apple stuffing into the larger main body. Secure the bird at each end with metal skewers.

Cooking guidelines: Preheat the oven to 180°C, gas mark 4. Weigh the goose and calculate the cooking time, allowing 35 minutes per kilo, plus 10 minutes. Place the goose on a metal rack over a large roasting tin. Roast for 45 minutes, pouring off excess fat. Return to the oven for the remaining cooking time, or until thoroughly cooked and the juices run clear, pouring off the excess fat regularly.

Cover with foil and leave to rest for 15-30 minutes before carving.

Tip: An hour before the end of the cooking time, core eight small Cox eating apples through the bases, leaving the stalks intact. Stud each one with 8-10 whole cloves. Place around the goose for the final hour.

Serve the goose with the apples, garnished with bay leaves and apple sauce with cider.

• Maple-glazed turkey with mushrooms and sage

Six turkey breast steaks will serve six people. Preparation: Heat two tablespoons of sunflower oil in a large frying pan with a lid. Add the turkey steaks and fry for 6-8 minutes, turning occasionally, until almost cooked through.

Mushroom and sage sauce: Return all the steaks to the pan. Stir in 250g organic chestnut mushrooms, halved. Add 7g of fresh sage leaves roughly chopped. Thinly slice two cloves of garlic and add to pan. Cover and cook for 2-3 minutes.

Pour in five tablespoons of whiskey and boil rapidly to reduce the liquid by half. Add four tablespoons of medium maple syrup and 150ml of chicken stock. Return to the boil for 4-5 minutes, until the liquid is now a sticky glaze and the turkey is cooked through. Season to taste.

Garnish with whole sage leaves. Serve with basmati rice and mini sweet corn cobs.

Choose perfect gifts for all the women in your life

Soap & Glory – The Big Thrill

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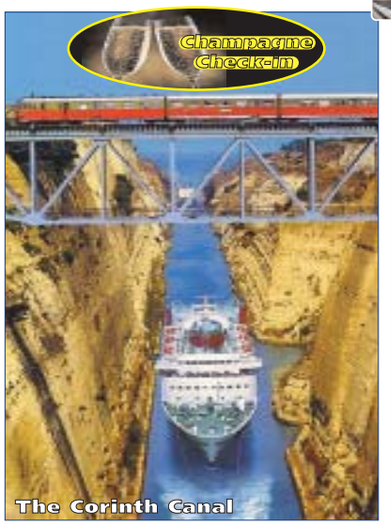

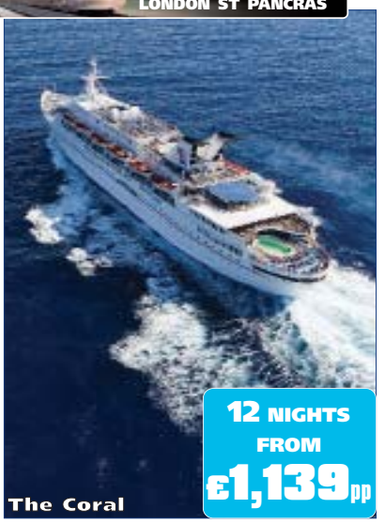

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Water lot of fun

FESTIVE fun continues at Bewl Water after Christmas with interactive pantomime Cinderella.

The Lamberhurst attraction invites families to keep the revelry going by attending a performance of this fun show. It takes place indoors in the Bewl Exhibition Hall, safely away from the winter weather, and there will be lots of surprises.

The classic story will be played out in traditional style but there will be some exciting extras, such as party dances with Bewl's popular mascots. Once they have enjoyed the performance, children will have the chance to meet the cast and pose for photographs with them. Whether children long to meet Prince Charming or to have their picture taken with the beautiful Cinderella, this will be a chance to make fairytale characters come to life.

Cinderella runs from Sunday to Thursday, December 27-31 and again from Saturday to Monday, January 2-4. Performances start at 10.30am or 2pm and last two-and-a-half hours. Tickets cost £5 and booking is essential, so call 01892 890661 or visit www.bewl.co.uk to reserve your seats.

Bewl Water is open from 9am to sunset, every day except Christmas Day, but some attractions are not open in the winter. Call Bewl or see the website for more details.

Enjoy a truly Ace evening

THERE can be no better way to get into the party spirit than during an evening spent with the Jive Aces.

Widely recognised as one of the country's top jive and swing bands, these hugely entertainingly and infectiously enthusiastic performers fill dancefloors wherever they play. Tonight fans and newcomers will have the chance to experience this exciting band when they perform live at the Gulbenkian Theatre in Canterbury.

The six-piece band from London started out as a group of lads who shared a love of hot jive, rock 'n' roll and big band swing – in short, anything that had beat, energy and fun. They loved to dance to the sounds of the genre's best bands whenever they had the chance, but soon found there were just not enough exponents of the foot-tapping, spirit-raising music they loved.

So they decided to turn their talents to creating the music and from their first gig in Paris in 1989, the Jive Aces were a hit. They have been filling dance floors with their high energy, entertaining sound ever since, performing in the US and working with some top dancers and troupes.

Combining their own original tunes with fresh arrangements of songs from the swing era, they have become a favourite of dancers all over the world. Special guest star Kenny Ball will also be appearing.

The show starts at 7.45pm and tickets cost £16/£15. To book call the box office on 01227 769075 or visit the website at www.gulbenkiantheatre.co.uk.

GHOST TOUR

SHOOTING

Fabulous fairytales

CHARACTERS from classic stories populate the rooms at Leeds Castle this Christmas.

As part of the festive fun at the castle near Maidstone, a fabulous fairytale theme can be seen in many of the chambers. The stories really come to life during the Fairytale Christmas tours, which take place after the daytime visitors have left from tonight until Wednesday. Running from 5-8pm, the tours will give visitors a special festive experience as the fairytale characters come to life in this beautiful setting.

Tickets cost £15 for adults, including mulled wine and a mince pie, and £10 for children, who will receive hot chocolate and a mini yule log. The tours must be pre-booked by calling 01622 880008.

The fairytale fun continues on Boxing Day, when visitors can follow a fairytale trail through the grounds. A reward will be on offer for children who complete the trail, which costs an extra £1.

Leeds Castle is open every day except Christmas Day and tickets cost £16.50/£13.50 for adults and £9.50 for children. To find out more about events see www.leeds-castle.com or call 01622 765400.

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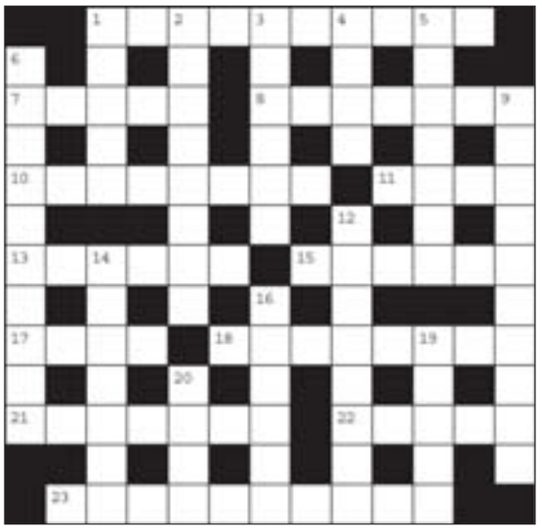
No 366



CROSSWORD No 366

Name.....

Address .....

.....

.....

CRYPTIC CLUES

Across

1. Ball made square possibly (10)
7. Bid from a heartless offender (5)
8. Raise to a higher state, given no blemish to hide (7)
10. The beauty of justice (8)
11. Weapons some people play with (4)
13. Abraham ties me in knots (6)
15. The price of saving derelict manors (6)
17. Oatmeal soup holds it, too! (4)
18. Not a descent of which one may be proud! (4,4)
21. Laced it as ordered (7)
22. Discrimination shown by a new state (5)
23. Later chasing minors (10)

Down

1. Muslim lawyer in plain clothes (5)
2. Calm sentry that is agitated (8)
3. Being restive is not any use, but might be! (6)
4. Called for part of a ladder (4)
5. Give title to records of debts and become doubtful (7)
6. Appropriate change of accent is made (10)
9. Simply was to obtain poise (4,6)
12. Could be a tiger near meat perhaps (3-5)
14. Dog responsible for mother's quarrel (7)
16. One won't be the first to do it (6)
19. A good place for caravans en route (5)
20. In past years viewers have been irritated by it (4)

SCRIBBLE HERE

QUICK CLUES

Across

1. Vague (10)
7. Consumed (5)
8. Reasonable (7)
10. Length of time (8)
11. Plan (4)
13. Business magnate (6)
15. Male goose (6)
17. Candid (4)
18. Abuse (8)
21. Wreath (7)
22. Affirm (5)
23. Severity (10)

Down

1. Bury (5)
2. Gift (8)
3. Succeed (6)
4. Near (4)
5. Grappled with (7)
6. Self-willed (10)
9. Reading matter (10)
12. Adherent (8)
14. Stripe (7)
16. Bicycle for two (6)
19. Foe (5)
20. Decline (4)

CRYPTIC SOLUTIONS 365: Across: 6 Sceptic; 7 Hands; 9 Lee; 10 Perimeter; 12 Show of hands; 15 Golf courses; 17 Giving out; 19 Bob; 21 Beach; 22 Tedious. Down: 1 Screw; 2 Spa; 3 Bite; 4 Pacemaker; 5 Addenda; 8 Differ; 11 Chaffinch; 13 Wrongs; 14 Conifer; 16 Bogus; 18 Uses; 20 Tip. **QUICK SOLUTIONS 366:** Across: 61 Indefinite; 7 Eaten; 8 Logical; 10 Duration; 11 Plot; 13 Tycoon; 15 Gander; 17 Open; 18 Maltreat; 21 Garland; 22 Swear; 23 Indemency. Down: 1 Inter; 2 Donation; 3 Follow; 4 Nigh; 5 Tackled; 6 Headstrong; 9 Literature; 12 Partisan; 14 Chevron; 16 Tandem; 19 Enemy; 20 Fall.

• The winner of the last crossword (no 365) is Mr I Humphrey, Tunbridge Wells

Nothing simple about fine food when it's prepared by the French

RESTAURANT REVIEW
BY **GARY WRIGHT**

THE restaurant promised 'simple French food' and that was enough to see me through the door and settled at a table without even studying the menu properly.

Brasserie Gérard, in Tenterden's elegant High Street, is beautifully lit and its simple, mainly wooden, décor is complimented by enough little touches to earn its Gallic billing.

Now, remember the French are good at simple food: take a thin cut of beef, beat it flat, sear it on either side and serve with a pile of proper thin French fries and you have a tasty, swift main course, anywhere.

I was looking for more than that on a Saturday evening out, but I felt secure that my default steak et frites would ensure I left happy.

There was a choice of nine starters and around 20 main courses... which is ample.

If there's one lesson Scottish telly chef Gordon Ramsay has taught me it is that good restaurants don't offer too much choice (it allows the chef to concentrate on doing a few things well, you see?) and that knowledge has repeatedly proved accurate.

I didn't understand why we were told the complimentary French bread was complimentary – I'm sure a Frenchman would chuckle but I'm sure some Englishmen would want to check they weren't being charged – but it was welcome as we mulled over the choice of starters, narrowing it down to two, eventually.

I was tempted by the champignon farci – roasted field mushrooms, topped with buttered spinach and a poached free-range egg and glazed with a creamy cheese sauce (£5.95). But settled for the terrine de foies de volaille, a coarse chicken and pork liver pate, with pickled gherkins which came with a baguette (though mine didn't, initially, the only mistake of the evening) at £5.50.

My partner chose the soupe à l'oignon with Gruyère cheese croutons (£4.95) after brief flirtation with the gravadlax, pepper and dill-cured salmon in a sweet mustard and cucumber garnish (£5.95).

So perhaps the food wasn't quite so simple after all.

Equally the wine list was straightforward, and from the choice of eight reds, the perfect choice for me was a full-bodied black-curranty Shiraz-Cabernet, from, er, Australia in fact. The sort of red you could drink anytime available in glasses, carafes of bottles.

A jug of iced water arrived without any silly discussion about still or sparkling – it was free.

I was already pretty content and as the restaurant began to fill up at around 9pm the service never faltered.

For her main course, my partner chose boeuf Bourguignon – beef braised in red wine with bacon lardons, mushroom, carrots and herbs served with mashed potato (£13.95).

I eventually settled on the evening special from the board, seafood skewers of cod, salmon and prawn, with a little salad and, of course, les frites.

The food was very good. The beef Bouguignon melted in the mouth and tasted wonderful, while the seafood was more an hors d'oeuvres than a main course.

It was at almost exactly the moment I tucked into my main course that I realised Brasserie Gérard is in fact part of a chain. "Like Café Rouge, a few doors down?" I asked the waiter.

And so it is, with almost 30 restaurants across Britain, including Sevenoaks and Canterbury here in Kent.

We finished our meal with an excellent tart tartin and a crème brullee and during coffee, reflected on some of the nicest service experienced in a long time and smiled when the final bill of £66 was presented.

Personally, I'd recommend the restaurant to anyone. Bon appetite.

Brasserie Gerard,
13-15 High Street, Tenterden, TN30 6NN.
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Builders maintain an interest in reducing our carbon footprint

BY **CHRIS MURPHY**

A CONFERENCE on how best to build green homes in Kent and the UK is being held for the first time next month.

The Green Building Maintenance Conference is aimed at helping developers to discover the best ways of keeping up with new demands from inspectors and buyers.

The main message of the event is: "We should only proceed with green improvements to existing homes if we fully understand the implications."

It is being held on January 7 at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff.

It will focus professional attention on how effective building maintenance is essential for tackling and coping with the effects of climate change and is timed to be close to the Copenhagen climate change summit.

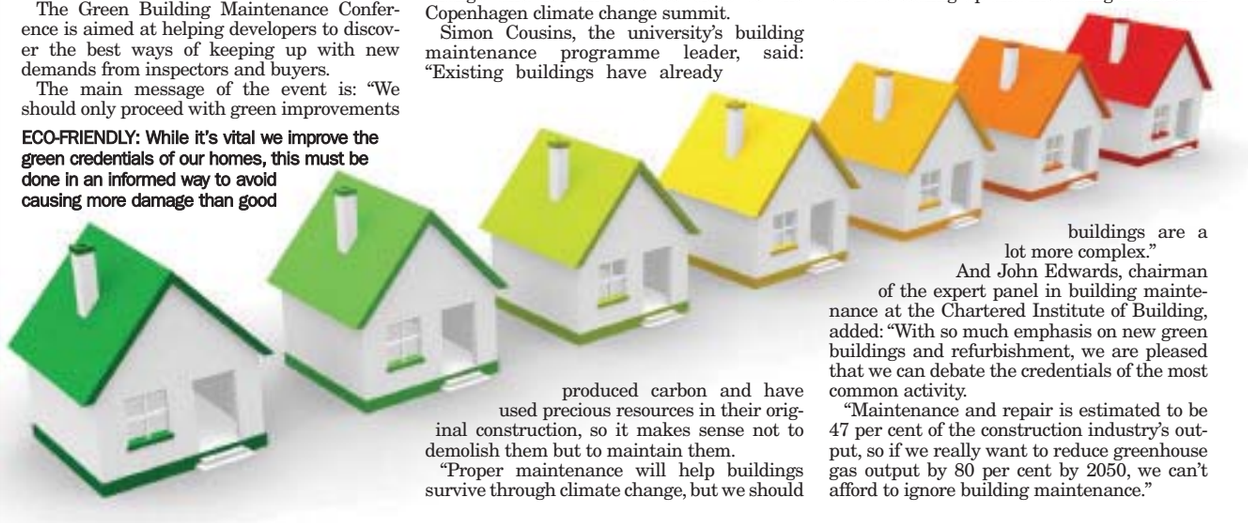
Simon Cousins, the university's building maintenance programme leader, said: "Existing buildings have already produced carbon and have used precious resources in their original construction, so it makes sense not to demolish them but to maintain them.

"Proper maintenance will help buildings survive through climate change, but we should only proceed with green improvements if we properly understand the implications, otherwise we could be creating other problems for the buildings and their occupants.

"As climate change takes hold, the simple things like clearing gutters and drains will become even more important, but other issues such as sealing up and insulating traditional buildings are a lot more complex."

And John Edwards, chairman of the expert panel in building maintenance at the Chartered Institute of Building, added: "With so much emphasis on new green buildings and refurbishment, we are pleased that we can debate the credentials of the most common activity.

"Maintenance and repair is estimated to be 47 per cent of the construction industry's output, so if we really want to reduce greenhouse gas output by 80 per cent by 2050, we can't afford to ignore building maintenance."



ECO-FRIENDLY: While it's vital we improve the green credentials of our homes, this must be done in an informed way to avoid causing more damage than good

Encouraging a focus on safety

HOME developers in Kent have been told a new award scheme is being launched to reward the way health and safety is handled.

The National House-Building Council said it will be a dedicated health and safety award scheme for the homebuilding industry.

Those companies that stick closest to the rules will be rewarded with gongs for health and safety best practice.

The aptly named NHBC Health and Safety Awards will recognise homebuilders in the county who make the best efforts to maintain health and safety concerns at the top of their agenda in spite of the economic downturn.

To qualify, all NHBC registered builders will have to notify organisers of their interest by the end of the year.

NHBC said it recognises emergence from a recession is often coupled with a rise in the number of accidents on site as more and more corners are cut to keep costs down.

But the cost in human misery cannot be calculated against the small cost of keeping a building site safe, and so the NHBC said it wants to ensure a continued focus on health and safety despite the price in pounds.

Small, medium and large builders will be judged fairly against their peers to ensure everyone across the range is catered for.

Three special awards will be presented for excellence and innovation in taking health and safety to staff onsite and in the community. They will be given following a rigorous judging process and site inspections.

PROTECTED: Healthy and safety is key to a successful building site

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Maidstone Asking Price £295,000

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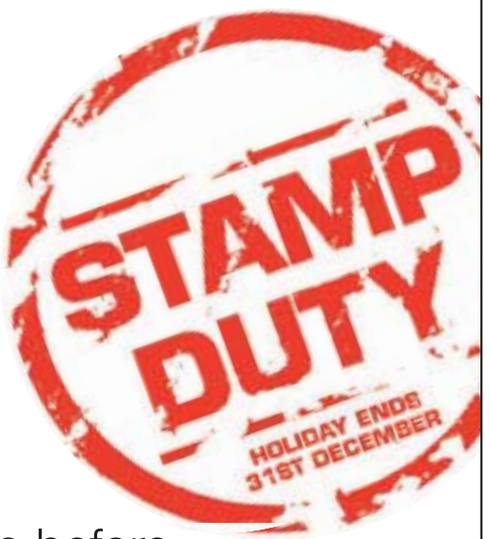

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Maidstone

- Three Bedroom Terrace House
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Harrietsham

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- Five bedroom semi detached
- Two receptions, long garden
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OIEO £315,000

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- Three Bedroom Detached House
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OIEO £160,000

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Offers Over £155,000

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- Rear garden, garage, no chain

OIEO £135,000

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- Kitchen, lounge, bathroom
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- & ground rent to be confirmed.

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- Conservatory. Swimming pool.

OIEO £415,000

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- Four Bedroom Detached House.
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- En-Suite Facilities Bathroom.

OIEO £240,000

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Minster on Sea

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- Double glazing. Gas central heating.

£160,000

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Kemsley

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- Possible room to extend subject to planning.

£135,000

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Minster On Sea

- Three bedrooms, garage
- Off road parking, sea views, no chain.
- Double glazing, central heating,

OIEO £130,000

CALL OUR SHEERNESS OFFICE 01795 660255

Kemsley

- Two bedroom house
- Ideal as a first time buy or young family.
- Allocated parking. Garden.

OIEO £130,000

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Sheerness

Three bedroom end of terrace house.
Close proximity to town centre and local amenities.
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- Viewing Recommended.

OIEO £100,000

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OIEO £100,000

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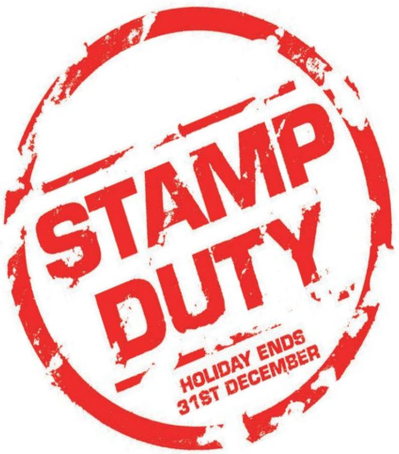

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OIEO £120,000

Three bedroom town house. Two receptions, spacious kitchen/diner, ground floor bathroom and rear garden.

Rochester

£165,000

Four bedroomed extended semi-detached home that boasts double glazing, central heating, fitted kitchen

Cliffe Woods

OIRO £184,995

Three bedroom semi detached house. Benefitting from double glazing, central heating, driveway and garage.

Rochester

OIRO £220,000

Do not miss out on this three bedroom detached bungalow. In need of improvement, Frindsbury location, No chain.

Chattenden

OIRO £239,995

Three bedroom town house, kitchen with private balcony, utility room and cloakroom/shower room, lounge/dining room.

Rochester

£239,995

Spacious three bedroom semi detached home consists of living room, dining room, fitted kitchen with utility area.

High Halstow

Guide Price £275,000

Four double bedroom detached home situated in a sought after village. Parking. Kitchen. Cloakroom. Conservatory.

Hoo

Asking Price £275,000

Four bedroom detached bungalow. Off road parking. Potential to extend. Planning permission granted.

Rochester

OIEO £295,000

Five bedroom semi-detached home situated in popular central location. Double glazing, central heating, utility room.

Strood

£449,995

Four bedroom detached house. Llounge, dining room, kitchen, utility room, GF cloakroom, conservatory.

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Countrywide

Maidstone

OIEO £119,995

Two bedroom flat, garage and driveway, woodland views, refitted bathroom. Viewing recommended.

Maidstone

Asking Price £130,000

Two bedroom ground floor apartment on Queens Road. En-suite shower room. Allocated parking. Fitted wardrobes.

Maidstone

£210,000

Spacious two bedroom house with bathroom, downstairs shower room and toilet, separate receptions, garden and parking spaces.

Maidstone

£219,995

Flexible family accommodation, lounge, kitchen with office adjacent, cloakroom and storage area, 3 bedrooms and bathroom. The rear garden.

Wateringbury

Asking Price £225,000

Modern style accommodation over two storeys, semi rural location, should be seen in person to be fully appreciated.

Maidstone

Offers Over £235,000

NO CHAIN. Detached modern three bedroom house. Conservatory, en-suite, integral garage, landscaped gardens.

Maidstone

£249,995

lounge/diner with wood flooring, storeroom, kitchen with barrelled ceiling, 3 bedrooms, en-suite bathroom and family bathroom.

Maidstone

£349,995

Separate reception rooms in lounge and dining room. Kitchen. Four bedrooms. Family bathroom plus guest shower room.

Penenden Heath

OIEO £350,000

Unique and imposing period house. Four bedrooms and three reception rooms. Double garage and gated driveway.

Boughton Monchelsea

Asking Price £450,000

Unique four bedroom bungalow in semi rural village location. Double garage. Viewing essential.

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Needs further improvement: A Ground Floor Flat in a pleasant residential road on the outskirts of Sevenoaks. 2 bedrooms. Sitting room; Sun room. 2 Garages. Front and rear gardens.
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KEMSING **£495,000**
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LEYBOURNE/WEST MALLING BORDERS **£295,000**
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West Malling 01732 842668

SHOREHAM **£299,995**
First Floor Apartment retaining original features with views over communal grounds and the River Darent. Master Bedroom en suite. Further Bedroom/Drawing room. Double aspect Sitting room. Garage; allocated parking.
Otford 01959 522164

KEMSING **£230,000**
Scope for Modernisation/Extension, Subj Planning: A 3 bedroom semi-detached property on the market for the first time since built in the 1960s and convenient for local amenities. Garage. Rear garden adjoining Woodland. NO CHAIN.
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WEST MALLING **£239,995**
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Give youngsters a chance

BACKING: Colin Carmichael is a new member of the Diploma Employer Champions Network

Plea to companies to offer diploma to prepare school leavers for working life

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

LOCAL employers are being urged to support the new Diploma qualification and help prepare more youngsters for working life.

The message comes from the chief executive of Canterbury council Colin Carmichael, who is one of the newest members of the national Diploma Employer Champions Network (DECN).

The network also has a number of major firms signed up in support of the skills-based qualification, including British Gas, Microsoft, the RAF, Toyota and IBM.

Mr Carmichael said: "Canterbury council is one of the largest employers in the local area and we are very keen to support the Diploma since we feel the qualification helps ensure all students are catered for in terms of their interests and learning styles.

"We also see our involvement as a means to engage with the young people in the area we serve.

"We have signed a memorandum of understanding with the local 14 to 19 partnership, which states the council will be the first port of call when any employer engagement is requested across all the lines of learning."

Regarded as an accompaniment to GCSEs, A-levels and apprenticeships, the Diploma allows youngsters aged between 14 and 19 to combine classroom study with practical learning.

Subjects currently available include engineering, IT, hospitality and hair and beauty studies.

According to the DECN, employers can help support the qualification by providing talks and lectures, setting business problems for students to work on as projects, offering work experience placements, and so on.

National Diploma champion Chris Mayer – chief executive of Her Majesty's Court Service – said: "The Champions Network promotes the benefits of the Diploma to employers and demonstrates that well-respected employers are integral to the design and delivery of the qualification.

"It is great to have Colin Carmichael and Canterbury council on board, working to improve educational opportunities for young people."

• ***Visit www.dcsf.gov.uk for more information.***

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Apprentice Ross is a bright spark

A TRAINEE electrician from Tonbridge has been named the South East's Best Apprentice.

Ross Mills, 23, will now compete for the national title after beating 10 other hopefuls to the award, which was organised by the training provider JTL.

Chief executive Denis Hird said: "These are challenging times for the construction industry but it is a great tribute to employees in the South East that they are training up high-quality young people like Ross.

"It is they who will provide the skills the region needs when the industry emerges from the present downturn."

Mr Mills is employed by the Tunbridge Wells-based Strange Electrical. In second place was Philip Hadaway of Sittingbourne-based electrical contractor WE Manin.

Headteachers' trust in move to new offices

THE Kent-based Southern Educational Leadership Trust has relocated to new offices near Sittingbourne.

The charity, which delivers the national qualification for head teachers, was previously based in West Malling but has now moved to be closer to the M2 and M20.

Chief executive Frank Clare said: "We were also looking at cost-effectiveness and were attracted by the opportunity to purchase the freehold, which we felt offered good value for money."

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Nacro is the principal crime reduction charity in England and Wales. It works to reduce crime by delivering a range of socially inclusive crime prevention initiatives by working for a fair and effective criminal justice system and by resettling offenders.

Nacro Services in Kent and Medway offers vocational and skills training to young people aged 14-19years / adult learners and those who wish to improve their literacy and numeracy. Our aim is to motivate raise self-esteem and increase self confidence through effective training and skills development to progress our learners into education, training or employment.

As our provision extends we are looking for lively, self motivated individuals who enjoy the challenge of working with people of all ages but, in particular, young people.

We have the following vacancies at our Chatham New Bridge House Centre:

PROGRAMME MANAGER

£21,273

We are looking for a motivated individual to develop and deliver a Hospitality/Catering Foundation Learning course to 14-19 year olds, which includes e2e Provision and Schools.

You will possess the appropriate skills to engage young people in Hospitality and Catering to increase their participation and progression. You will be experienced in using imaginative new techniques to ensure take up of the course.

ASSISTANT TRAINER

£13,466

We are looking for a motivated individual to assist the Programme Manager to develop and deliver a Hospitality/Catering Foundation Learning course to 14-19 year olds which includes e2e Provision and Schools.

You will possess the appropriate skills to engage young people in Hospitality and Catering to increase their participation and progression.

Contact colin.farrow@nacro.org.uk or call Colin Farrow on 01634 818305 for an application pack.

We have the following vacancy at our Pathways Construction Centre in Chatham:

TRAINER

£17,834

We hold contracts for Entry to Employment (e2e) and Schools to deliver programmes which engage and develop young people in order that they may progress into Employment, Training or Further Education.
We are looking for an individual to join our staff team who is enthusiastic, lively and creative. You will be someone with experience/qualifications in Personal and Social areas so that we can expand our programme for young people.

This post will be based at our Pathways Centre which specialises in Construction

Contact carlie.kimpton@nacro.org.uk or call Carlie Kimpton on 01634 402761 for an application pack.

We have the following vacancies at our Sittingbourne Centre:

YOUTH WORKER – PART TIME (18HRS) ESF Switch Project

£7,946

We are looking for an enthusiastic individual who can motivate and engage young people between the ages of 14-16 on short motivational courses. You will need to be willing to travel to deliver the courses in various locations across Kent.

TRAINER – ESF TIE Project

£17,834

We are looking for an individual to join our staff team who is enthusiastic, lively and creative. You will be someone with experience/qualifications in Personal and Social areas so that we can expand our programme with 14-19 year old young people. You will need to be willing to travel to deliver the courses in various locations across Kent, and including the Young Offenders Institute in Medway.
These post will work from our Sittingbourne Centre

Contact colin.farrow@nacro.org.uk or call Colin Farrow on 01634 818305 for an application pack.
Closing date for all the above posts is 8 January 2010

VOLUNTEERS

We are looking for people who like to volunteer to support the learners in our Centres in various roles e.g. mentoring, support for Skills for Life, in particular reception type duties at our Pathways Centre. Travel and lunch expenses are paid.

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KCA provides a wide range of high quality, innovative primary care mental health services. We require an Administrative Assistant to be a member of the Psychological Therapy Providers (PTP) team. You will need proficiency in copy typing, minute-taking and data in-putting, as well as experience of working independently. A sound understanding and experience of using a range of computer applications, including Microsoft Access and Excel is required.
An understanding of statistics and basic data analysis is desirable, although a willingness to learn would be acceptable.

You will need to be able to respond to people in a professional manner and have good communication skills.

Should you wish to discuss this role informally please contact Smita Derodra or Karl Grice on 01795 590212.

An application form and job description can be downloaded from www.kca.org.uk or call 01795 590635. Please quote reference: 628.

Closing date: 31 December 2009.
Interview date: 12 January 2010 in Faversham.

KCA (UK) is committed to the principles of equality of opportunity for all.
Charity No: 292824.

www.kca.org.uk

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

To advertise in this section
01303 817040

Seven Springs, Pembury Road
Tunbridge Wells

Leonard Cheshire Disability

FULL TIME SUPPORT WORKER

Required to work in a busy friendly Residential Home for physically disabled adults.

Experience preferred but not essential as full training will be given.

For an application form and job description please contact us on 01892 531138 during office hours. Closing date Friday 8th January 2010.

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Practice Administrator

General office administration including opening post, scanning and electronic distribution. Telephone and face to face contact with patients. Word processing, photocopying, faxing etc.
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one week mornings
and following week late afternoons
Applications with CV to Dr Taylor & Partners, Newton Place Surgery, Newton Rd, Faversham, ME13 8FH

Data Entry Assistant (Job Share)

Team-oriented person required for digital education company in Beckenham. Able to work in busy team, answer calls, queries, data entry, customer correspondence, tests & diplomas.
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Is this the job for you?

ACH is a fast-growing organisation, developing new, high-quality residential homes for adults with Learning Disabilities. Due to our continued growth we now require the following staff to complement our team at our home in

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www.achuk.com

SENIOR SUPPORT WORKERS
Salary from £15,250

SUPPORT WORKERS
Salary £13,250

For an application pack please visit our website at www.achuk.com
Alternatively e-mail louise.burrows@achuk.com or contact Human Resources on 0208 502 8871.

ACH London Limited
Providing Care, Developing Independence

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ACH is a fast-growing organisation, developing new, high-quality residential homes for adults with Learning Disabilities. Due to our continued growth we now require the following staff to complement our team at our homes in

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www.achuk.com

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For an application pack please visit our website at www.achuk.com

Alternatively e-mail louise.burrows@achuk.com or contact Human Resources on 0208 502 8871.

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS

KOS MEDIA (PUBLISHING) LTD TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Advertisements will be accepted only on the express condition that the advertiser warrants that the advertisement does not in any way contravene any existing legislation and in particular the Trade and Description Act 1968 and the Consumer Credit Act 1974.
2. It is the responsibility of all advertisers to ensure that all advertising meets all forms of government legislation and KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd (the "media owner") takes no responsibility for liability in errors and omissions to the content of our media.
3. All rates quoted are subject to VAT at the rate currently in force at the time the advertisement appears.
4. All rates within the annual advertising agreement will be rate protected for 12 months from the first date of publication under the signed agreement.
5. Any unsuitable material posted on any website belonging to KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd by the advertiser or any associated third party will be removed or refused. All passwords and security supplied to the advertiser by KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd in relation to the use of the posting of material via the media owner's online administration tool will be the responsibility of the advertiser. The advertiser indemnifies KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd against any damages as a result of misuse of these privileges by either the advertiser or any third party given password privileges by the advertiser.
6. KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd reserves the right to change passwords intermittently to ensure the overall and ongoing security of its websites within the public domain.
7. Copyright and licenses for voice-over/music/photography or film for advertising promotions or otherwise within the various forms of media in print, online and moving film owned by KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd must have been sought, verified or paid for by the advertiser where applicable. Approval or permissions must have been given by any potential beneficial owner voice-over or music. The advertiser must be able to verify any statements or claims (promotional or otherwise) in relation to their products/services promoted within any of the media offerings belonging to KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd.
8. Where shrinkage of an advertisement occurs for whatever reason, the advertisement will be charged to the nearest full centimetre where it relates to the media owner's printed publications. This will NOT apply to full-page advertisements, which remain full pages even after shrinkage.
9. KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd reserves the right to omit or refuse any advertisement/commercial/web content without notice or explanation. In these terms the word "advertiser" shall be construed to include any person or organisation placing an advertisement on behalf of another.
10. A guarantee of insertion cannot be given and the media owners shall not be liable for any loss or damage caused by any error inaccuracy within your marketing content. In no case shall the total liability of the media owner for any error or omission exceed the price charged by the media owners for that advertising.
11. No liability is accepted for any loss or damage alleged to have arisen through delay in forwarding replies to Box numbers, however caused, nor for the loss or damage to any artwork supplied.
12. Claims for any error or inaccuracy in your media messages with KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd must be made in writing to the accounts department within 10 days of publishing.
13. KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd accepts no responsibility for any errors or omissions made on their websites by the advertiser.
14. KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd has the right to cancel the advertiser's annual membership without notice should the advertiser deliberately publish out of date material or content on any of the media owner's online digital platforms. KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd will seek to recover, in full, all outstanding invoices in relation to the signed annual membership as a result of the advertiser's negligence in this regard and reserves the right to claim damages for any potential vexatious action via the advertiser.
15. Advertisers are requested to check their advertisements after the first insertion. The media owner will not be responsible for any errors on subsequent insertions, which have not been advised to them in writing.
16. A minimum of one month's notice must be given in writing for any cancellation of the signed annual advertiser's agreement. Upon cancellation, all discounts from KOS Media's standard effective media advertising rate card (July 2008–June 2009) will be recalculated and adjusted accordingly in line with KOS Media's standard media rate card (effective July 2008-June 2009) and will reflect the revised length of commitment denoted by the advertiser's written cancellation. Any surcharges, refunds or costs in relation to the production of the advertiser's TV commercial for the commitment set out within the advertiser's agreement will be met in full by the advertiser as per KOS Media's standard media advertising rate card (July 2008–June 2009). Discounts will be reapplied and any refunds or surcharges will be paid by either party within 30 days of the advertiser's written cancellation. Any other advertising placed must give a minimum of seven days' written notice and any discounts given for series bookings will be forfeited by the advertiser upon cancellation.
17. Seasonal contracts, Your Professional classified advertisements or any uplift advertising within the annual contract with the advertiser will be invoiced in full - at rate card - on receipt of any written cancellation of this contract within the 12-months.
18. All uplift advertisements must be booked in at least three months in advance of publication and will be subject to availability. All dates booked will be on a first-come, first-served basis.
19. The advertiser must agree to the date and time of filming of any online TV advertising commercial supplied by KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd within the advertiser's agreement, (Platinum, Gold, Silver standard of commercial). Should, for any reason, the advertiser not be available at the agreed time without giving sufficient notice (at least 48 hours), KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd reserves the right to charge for any further TV production at its standard published hourly rate should the advertiser still wish to use KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd's production services to complete its TV commercial or photographic imagery included in the advertiser's agreement. The advertiser will approve and accept that there are only two choices of voice-over and music offered by KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd. Should an advertiser wish to use other voice-overs or non-copyright free music it is the responsibility of the advertiser to pay the PRS rights should they be required to do so. Any changes to or failure to approve the TV production by the deadlines agreed between both parties will result in KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd being given permission by the advertiser to replace the TV commercial with pictures or stills from a choice of photography supplied by the media owner until the advertiser can supply a TV commercial produced at their own cost and risk outside of this agreement. The advertiser also accepts and agrees that this action would not reduce the value or cost of their membership. Any cost of changes required to the TV commercial throughout the advertiser's agreement will be borne by the advertiser outside of this agreement.
20. Each advertiser accepts that their ranking and position within KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd's search engine will be equal to those within their category (Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze, etc) other than they will be ranked based on the search engine criteria of optimisation within their level (Platinum, Gold, Silver or Bronze).
21. Any delivery claims made by the advertiser or discount vouchers published within the print or online media of KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd and any action as a result of the public or otherwise is the sole responsibility of the advertiser. Any claims resulting from this via KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd must be met by the advertiser.
22. a. All credit accounts due for payment shall be notified to the Advertiser by the 30th day following the date of the invoice, time to be of the essence. All sums due to KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd or RBS Factoring shall be paid in full, and the Advertiser shall have no right of set off in any circumstances.
    b. In the event that payment is not received by KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd or RBS Factoring by the due date, the media owner shall be entitled to suspend all further advertising until payment is received and/or repudiate the contract and make any surcharges for breaking the contract.
    c. In the event that payment is not received by KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd by the due date, the media owner reserves the right to charge interest on all overdue balances calculated on a daily basis at the rate of two per cent above the minimum lending rate of National Westminster Bank Plc from time to time in force.
    d. Not withstanding anything in these terms and conditions or implied to the contrary, in the event of the Advertiser ceasing to use the services of KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd (for whatever reason), the whole amount of monies due from the Advertiser to the date of cessation shall fall due for immediate payment.
    e. The Advertiser will be liable for all costs incurred by KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd in the recovery of debts not paid by the due date.
    f. Payment may be made by cheque, credit transfer, direct debit, cash and any major credit card.
23. Any discount which KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd may have agreed with the Advertiser shall be forfeited in the event of failure by the Advertiser to complete the contract or to meet the above credit terms.
24. Advertising Agency commission will be allowed to those advertisers recognised by the Newspaper Society, but shall not exceed ten per cent and will be subject to the terms of that recognition. This commission will not be allowed if the Advertising Agency fails to meet the terms.
25. All private advertisements and certain categories as laid down by KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd must be prepaid.
26. The Advertiser agrees to indemnify KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd in respect of all costs, damages or other charges falling upon the media owners or any of the companies within the KOS Media Group as the result of legal action or threatened legal action or threatened legal arising from the publication of any advertisement or advertising promotion.
27. An order for an advertisement shall amount to acceptance of these terms and conditions, and any condition placed on an order by an Advertiser shall be null and void in so far as it conflicts with them.
28. Copyright in advertisements produced wholly or partially by the media owners belong to KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd. Advertisers may not reproduce such advertisements without the media owner's written consent.

All terms and conditions stated above are in place to protect the advertiser, the media owner and the communities they serve within the public domain as well as the beneficial rights of individuals and organisations. KOS Media will endeavour to always act reasonably in applying its terms and conditions.

Effective from June 2008

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Saint George's

Church of England School Humanities College

Meadow Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 7LS
Tel: 01474 533082 Fax: 01474 561536
HEADTEACHER: Mrs A Southgate BDAKC

Church of England, Voluntary Aided, Humanities College
11-18, Mixed, Comprehensive School

Teaching Assistant (Behaviour)

KS3 Pts 7-11 £14,099 - £15,984
30 hours per week, 39 weeks per year
(Pro-Rata pay £9,646 - £10,936)

We are seeking an experienced Teaching Assistant to join our team.
We are looking for someone who has:

- The ability to work constructively with young people and to manage challenging behaviour
- A patient, calm and positive approach
- The ability to apply firm and consistent boundaries

Saint George's C of E School is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, celebrating diversity and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All appointments are subject to List 99 and enhanced CRB checks.

Contact us to request further details and an application form.
Email dhariwalj@saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk
or visit our website www.saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk

Closing Date : 8 January 2010

THE NEW SCHOOL AT WEST HEATH SEVENOAKS

Ashgrove Road, Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1SR

"Rebuilding lives through education"

Principal & Chief Executive:
Mrs Christina Wells (BA Hons.)

The New School at West Heath in Sevenoaks works towards helping students develop life skills and enjoy social activities. As a team we share a real desire to set a new, even higher standard of care in education and you can help us achieve this goal. The School has approval status from the Department for Children, Schools and Families and has an excellent rapport with both parents and the Local Authorities. The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Cleaning Personnel

We are looking to recruit a team of cleaners. Shift work to include occasional weekends. Previous experience essential. Salary exceeds minimum national wage.

Teaching Assistants

Supporting students individually and in groups. Previous experience and clean driving licence required.

Contact Lynne McGrath for an application form and job description.

Tel: 01732 460 553

Closing date for applications: Wednesday 23rd December 2009

The successful applicants will be subject to an enhanced CRB check.

To advertise in this section 01303 817040

THE SPENCER WING

East Kent Medical Services Ltd - a private facility at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford, are looking to recruit the following :

Staff Nurses Full/Part time Days/Nights

We also have vacancies within our Flexi Bank

To discuss these opportunities please contact
Sister Debbie Burr or Sister Jean Cosgrove on 01233 616202

For job description and application form please contact:
Mandy Oliver
East Kent Medical Services Ltd
The Spencer Wing, QEQM Hospital, Ramsgate Road, Margate, Kent CT9 4BG
Telephone: 01843 234556 Fax: 01843 296333
E-mail: mandy.oliver@thespencerwing.com

The Spencer Wing is an equal opportunity employer
These positions are subject to a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure check

East Kent Medical Services Ltd
The Spencer Wing, William Harvey Hospital, Kennington Road,
Willesborough, Ashford, Kent TN24 OLZ
Telephone: 01233 616201 Fax: 01233 616252
e-mail:enquiries@thespencerwing.com
Company Registration 03130118

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

MidKent College

MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone is seeking to appoint an outstanding individual in the following area:

Further Education Sports Co-Ordinator Ref: PR029

Salary: £20,368 - £26,255 pro rata

15 hours per week (Medway and Maidstone Campus)

We are looking for an individual with a proven track record in Sports Development and the Further Education sector, to play a key role in increasing participation towards the 5 hour offer in sport and physical activity for young people aged 16-19yrs. This will entail the coordination and further development of the college's pathways and support, contributing to the development of the healthy college award and the cross-college activity programme, including outdoor pursuits and active leisure initiatives. As part of the Sports team, the ideal candidate will have excellent communication and leadership skills. Experience of working with young people and liaising with a wide range of organisations including schools within the three school sports partnerships, sports clubs and sports governing bodies is desirable.

Closing date: Friday 15 January 2009

MidKent College is working in partnership with RBLI Employment Solutions to support individuals who have a disability or health condition in the application, interview and employment with the college. If you would like any further information regarding RBLI, or require assistance with your application process then please contact RBLI on 0800 783 1144 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk for information, advice and guidance.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer

Action for Business College · Investors in Diversity · Positive About Disabled People · RBLI · Investors in People

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SCIENCE TECHNICIAN REQUIRED

Pent Valley Technology College: 11-18 mixed 1400 pupils
Salary: Kent Scheme 3 (£14,099 – £15,984 pro rata per annum)
Hours: 37 hours a week, Term-time plus 10 days

The successful candidate will be joining a Science Department which is well resourced and has a strong team of Specialist Teachers. Your main responsibilities will include the preparation of practical lessons, record-keeping, ordering supplies, displaying class work, assisting the science teacher during lesson time, and where necessary, to help students with experiments. You will need to be suitably qualified and particularly able to support the teaching of physics including AS and A Level. You should be able to demonstrate a good basic knowledge and understanding of laboratory techniques and previous school experience would be an advantage.

Offer of appointment is subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure. This school is committed to recruiting with care and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

For more information and an application form please contact:
Miss S Spratley, Pent Valley Technology College, Surrenden Road, Folkestone,
Kent. CT19 4ED.
Email: samantha.spratley@pent-valley.kent.sch.uk
Tel: 01303 277161 ext 2218 Fax: 01303 279342
Closing Date: Monday 4th January 2010

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GOLFKEEP TRADING LIMITED
Company Number 02891375

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of the above-named Company will be held at Sherlock House, 73 Baker Street, London W1U 6RD, on 22 December 2009, at 12.30 pm for the purposes mentioned in Sections 99, 100 and 101 of the said Act. Creditors wishing to vote at the Meeting must lodge their proxy, together with a full statement of account at the registered office - Sherlock House, 73 Baker Street, London W1U 6RD not later than 12.00 noon on the day prior to the meeting. For the purposes of voting, a secured Creditor is required (unless he surrenders his security) to lodge at the above address, before the Meeting, a statement giving particulars of his security, the date when it was given and the value at which it is assessed. A list of the names and addresses of the Company's creditors may be inspected, free of charge, at Tenon Recovery at the above address between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm on the two business days preceding the date of the meeting stated above. The resolutions at the creditors' meeting may include a resolution specifying the terms on which the liquidator is to be remunerated. The meeting may receive information about, or be asked to approve, the costs of preparing the statement of affairs and convening the meeting.
Dated 11 December 2009
By Order of the Board
Timothy John Angus, Director

WORLDTARE EXPORT LIMITED
Company Number 02982329

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of the above-named Company will be held at Sherlock House, 73 Baker Street, London W1U 6RD, on 22 December 2009, at 11.30 am for the purposes mentioned in Sections 99, 100 and 101 of the said Act. Creditors wishing to vote at the Meeting must lodge their proxy, together with a full statement of account at the registered office, Sherlock House, 73 Baker Street, London W1U 6RD not later than 12.00 noon on the day prior to the meeting. For the purposes of voting, a secured Creditor is required (unless he surrenders his security) to lodge at the above address, before the Meeting, a statement giving particulars of his security, the date when it was given and the value at which it is assessed. A list of the names and addresses of the Company's creditors may be inspected, free of charge, at Tenon Recovery, at the above address, between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm on the two business days preceding the date of the meeting stated above. The resolutions at the creditors' meeting may include a resolution specifying the terms on which the liquidator is to be remunerated. The meeting may receive information about, or be asked to approve, the costs of preparing the statement of affairs and convening the meeting.
By Order of the Board
Timothy John Angus, Director

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WORLDTARE PROPERTIES LIMITED
Company Number 02982850

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of the above-named Company will be held at Sherlock House, 73 Baker Street, London W1U 6RD, on 22 December 2009, at 1.30 pm for the purposes mentioned in Sections 99, 100 and 101 of the said Act. Creditors wishing to vote at the Meeting must lodge their proxy, together with a full statement of account at the registered office, Sherlock House, 73 Baker Street, London W1U 6RD not later than 12.00 noon on the day prior to the meeting. For the purposes of voting, a secured Creditor is required (unless he surrenders his security) to lodge at the above address, before the Meeting, a statement giving particulars of his security, the date when it was given and the value at which it is assessed. A list of the names and addresses of the Company's creditors may be inspected, free of charge, at Tenon Recovery at the above address, between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm on the two business days preceding the date of the meeting stated above. The resolutions at the creditors' meeting may include a resolution specifying the terms on which the liquidator is to be remunerated. The meeting may receive information about, or be asked to approve, the costs of preparing the statement of affairs and convening the meeting.
By Order of the Board
Timothy John Angus, Director

HIGHWAYS AGENCY

DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT
HIGHWAYS ACT 1980
1. THE A21 TRUNK ROAD (TONBRIDGE TO PEMBURY DUALLING) ORDER 20..
2. THE A21 TRUNK ROAD (TONBRIDGE TO PEMBURY DUALLING) (DETRUNKING) ORDER 20..
3. THE A21 TRUNK ROAD (TONBRIDGE TO PEMBURY DUALLING SIDE ROADS) ORDER 20..
4. THE A21 TRUNK ROAD (TONBRIDGE BYPASS TO PEMBURY BYPASS DUALLING) ORDER 1996 (REVOCATION) ORDER 20…
5. THE A21 TRUNK ROAD (TONBRIDGE BYPASS TO PEMBURY BYPASS DUALLING SIDE ROADS) ORDER 1996 (REVOCATION) ORDER 20…
6. THE A21 TRUNK ROAD (TONBRIDGE BYPASS TO PEMBURY BYPASS DUALLING SLIP ROADS) ORDER 1996 (REVOCATION) ORDER 20…
7. THE A21 TRUNK ROAD (TONBRIDGE BYPASS TO PEMBURY BYPASS DUALLING) (DETRUNKING) ORDER 1996 (REVOCATION) ORDER 20…

The SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT is considering implementation of a project for widening the A21 between Tonbridge and Pembury south of Tonbridge in the County of Kent.

He gives notice that to enable him to determine whether to implement the project he has published an Environmental Statement as required by Part VA of the Highways Act 1980, and proposes to make the following Orders:

1. An Order under sections 10 and 41 of the Highways Act 1980 which will provide that roads which he proposes to construct (the "new main road and slip roads") along the following routes shall become trunk roads from the date when the Order comes into force:

   a) a route to connect the A21 Tonbridge Bypass south of Tonbridge with the A21 Pembury Road west of Pembury.

   b) four routes from the A21 Pembury Road to and from the southbound and northbound carriageways of the trunk road which the Secretary of State proposes to construct at Fairthorne.

   c) four routes from the A21 Pembury Road including two roundabouts to and from the southbound and northbound carriageways of the trunk road which the Secretary of State proposes to construct at the Longfield Road / Tonbridge Road junction at Pembury

2. An Order under sections 10 and 12 of the Highways Act 1980 which will provide that the length of the A21 Trunk Road to be superseded by the new trunk road shall cease to be a trunk road and that the lengths remaining shall be classified as a classified road from the date on which the Secretary of State notifies the Kent County Council that the new trunk road is open for traffic

3. An Order under sections 12,14 and 125 of the Highways Act 1980, in relation to the A21 Trunk Road as proposed to be improved by him and the slip roads to be constructed by him at Tonbridge, Fairthorne and Pembury in the County of Kent, which will:

   (1) authorise him to :

   a) improve highways,
   b) stop-up highways,
   c) construct new highways,
   d) stop up private means of access to premises, and
   e) provide new means of access to premises

   All between Tonbridge and Pembury in the vicinity of the A21 Trunk Road and the slip roads; and

   (2) Provide for the transfer of each new highway to the Kent County Council as highway authority as from the date on which he notifies them that it has been completed and is open for traffic.

4. Four Orders, numbered 4, 5, 6 and 7 above, under sections 10, 12,14, 41, 125 and 326 of the Highways Act 1980 which, if made, would revoke:

- The A21 Trunk Road (Tonbridge Bypass to Pembury Bypass Dualling) Order 1996.
- The A21 Trunk Road (Tonbridge Bypass to Pembury Bypass Dualling Side Roads) Order 1996.
- The A21 Trunk Road (Tonbridge Bypass to Pembury Bypass Dualling Slip Roads) Order 1996.
- The A21 Trunk Road (Tonbridge Bypass to Pembury Bypass Dualling) (Detrunking) Order 1996.

Copies of each draft Order and the plans referred to in them, and of the Environmental Statement may be inspected free of charge at all reasonable hours from 11 December 2009 until 5 March 2010 at the Highways Agency, Major Projects (South), Federated House, London Road, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1SZ; Tonbridge Library, Avebury Avenue, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1TG; Pembury Library, The Hop House, Hemwood Green Road, Pembury, TN2 4HS; Tunbridge Wells Library, Mount Pleasant Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 1NS; Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 1RS; Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council Gateway, Tonbridge Castle, Castle Street, Tonbridge, TN9 1BG and Kent County Council Reception, Invicta House, County Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XX.

Copies of the Orders and the Environmental Statement may be bought from the Highways Agency at the address given below priced £185 or £5 on a CD. A copy of the Environmental Statement is also available on-line at www.highways.gov.uk until 5 March 2010.

ANY PERSON MAY OBJECT to the making of any of these Orders or comment on the Environmental Statement not later than 5 March 2010 by notice to the Secretary of State for Transport at the offices of the Highways Agency, Major Projects (South), Room 2A, Federated House, London Road, Dorking, Surrey, RH14 1SZ, quoting reference HA 065/023/58. Any objection to an Order must give the grounds on which it is made. In the preparation of an objection and the statement of grounds of objection, it should be borne in mind that the substance of it may be communicated to other people who may be affected.

Before deciding whether to proceed with the project the Secretary of State will consider any comments made about the Environmental Statement and the Secretary of State for Transport and the Secretary of State for communities and Local Government will consider jointly any objections to the draft orders.

Further information on the project and this notice may be obtained from Mr Graham Link (01306 878122 : graham.link@highways.gsi.gov.uk) or from

PAUL ARNOLD
Senior Project Manager

NOTICE OF PUBLIC PATH ORDER
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990, SECTION 257
AND PARAGRAPH 1 OF SCHEDULE 14
TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL

THE TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL (PUBLIC FOOTPATHS WBX17 MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD TO CLANRICARDE ROAD AND WBX18 CHURCH ROAD TO WBX17) (NO 1) PUBLIC PATH STOPPING UP ORDER 2009

The above order was made on 17th December 2009. The effect of the order will be to stop up the public footpaths running from Mount Pleasant Road to Clanricarde Road (WBX17) and from Church Road to path WBX17 (WBX18) as shown on the order map.

A copy of the order and order map may be seen free of charge at Tunbridge Wells Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2AB between the hours of 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday (except Thursday 9am to 6.30pm) or 10am and 4pm on Saturday. Copies of the order and map may be obtained there free of charge.

Any representation about or objection to the order may be sent or delivered in writing addressed to the Head of Planning Services, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 1 RS not later than 25th January 2010. Please state grounds on which it is made.

If no such representations or objections are duly made, or if any so made are withdrawn, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council may itself confirm the order as an unopposed order. If the order is sent to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Regional Affairs for confirmation any representations or objections which have not been withdrawn will be sent with the order.

Paul Cummins, Legal Services Manager,
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council,
Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 1RS.

Dated : 19th December 2009

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACTS – NOTICES OF APPLICATIONS

The following applications have been submitted to the Council and are being advertised for the reason(s) given in each case.

TM/09/02807/FL – Aldon Farmhouse Aldon Lane Offham West Malling Kent ME19 5PH – Dr Gordon Pringle is applying to replace pitched roof to garage. Reason: HH LB CA

TM/09/02977/FL – Kiln Barn Farm Kiln Barn Road Ditton Aylesford Kent ME20 6AH – Gallagher Properties Ltd are applying for construction of new four bedroom house with lower ground garage/cellar Amendment to design of replacement dwelling approved under Planning Permission TM03/03610/FL. Reason: GPI

TM/09/02941/FL – St Marys Lodge Comp Lane Platt Sevenoaks Kent TN15 8NR – Mr Graham Darby is applying for construction of canopy porch to entrance. Reason: CA HH

TM/09/02937/OA – Land Rear Of 56 Town Hill West Malling Kent – Middlefields Limited are applying for Outline Application for erection of two detached houses and garages. Reason: CA

TM/09/02551/FL – Bartons Farm Yopps Green Plaxtol Sevenoaks Kent TN15 0PY – Mr Benjamin Holder is applying for retrospective planning permission requested for the erection of 2m high close board fence parallel to the current eastern boundary of Bartons Farm where it borders Bartons Oast. Reason: CA LB HH

Reasons for the case being publicised:

LB	Application relates to/affects a Listed Building or its setting
CA	Application is within/affects a Conservation Area
GPI	Application is of general Public Interest
HH	Householder application - As this is a householder application, in the event of an appeal against a refusal of planning permission, which is to be dealt with on the basis of representations in writing, any representations made about this application will be sent to the Secretary of State, and there will be no further opportunity to comment at appeal stage.

These applications are displayed on our website www.tmbc.gov.uk – click on the button "Online Planning" (then View Existing Applications and select Public Access). You can submit your comments by emailing to planning.applications@tmbc.gov.uk (please quote the application number by the date set out below). Please note that we will publish a copy of any representations received on the Council's website, including your name and address.

Copies of applications listed may be seen during office hours (8.30 am and 5.00 pm Monday to Friday). Any applications within Hadlow, Hildenborough and Tonbridge are available at Tonbridge Castle, Tonbridge. Other applications are available at the office of the Director of Planning, Transport & Leisure, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4LZ. Any representations should be made in writing quoting the application number by 10 January 2010.

David Hughes
Chief Executive

20 December 2009

Town and Country Planning Acts

The Council is required to give notice of the following applications

09/03751/HOUSE The Granary Hale Farm, Capel
- Internal alterations with new window and soil vent pipe externally (LB)

09/03752/LBC The Granary Hale Farm, Capel
- Listed Building Consent: Internal alterations with new window and soil vent pipe externally (LB)

09/03645/FUL Turnden Hartley Road, Cranbrook And Sissinghurst
- Change of use from agriculture to use for equestrian activities and the provision of a staff office, toilet and kitchen block, quadrangle stable block, American barn, hay barn, sand school, associated parking and landscaping (LB)

09/03821/LBC 4 The Hill Cranbrook, Cranbrook And Sissinghurst
- Listed Building Consent: take up existing lounge and kitchen floor, re-lay (existing or like-for-like) onto new damp-proof membranes (LB)

09/03541/HOUSE Lidwells House North Road, Goudhurst
- Erection of detached garage (LB)

09/03844/HOUSE Mount House Ranters Lane, Goudhurst
- Demolition of single-storey lean-to structure. Erection of a single-storey rear extension and alterations to outbuilding (LB)

09/03846/LBC Mount House Ranters Lane, Goudhurst
- Listed Building Consent - Demolition of single-storey lean-to structure; erection of a single-storey rear extension and alterations to outbuilding (LB)

09/03800/CAC Holly Shaw Queens Road, Hawkhurst
- Conservation Area Consent - Demolition of existing bungalow and garage (CA)

09/03826/HOUSE Park Lodge Brick Kiln Lane, Horsmonden
- Proposed dormer window and alterations to allow the installation of an en-suite (LB)

09/03827/LBC Park Lodge Brick Kiln Lane, Horsmonden
- Listed Building Consent - Proposed dormer window and alterations to allow the installation of an en-suite (LB)

09/03866/FUL 7 Nevill Street Royal Tunbridge Wells, Pantiles & St Marks
- Change of use of building to hotel use (Class C1) ancillary to The Brew House Hotel, creation of dormer window on side roof slope, insertion of louvres in front and rear roof slopes, and erection of canopy over rear door (CA) (LB)

09/03815/FUL Tops Pizza 29 Camden Road, Park
- Variation of condition 1 of TW/01/01694/FUL - Extension of opening hours to 09:00am - 01:00am Sunday to Thursday and 09:00am - 02:00am Friday and Saturday (CA)

09/03780/FUL 37 Hastings Road Pembury, Pembury
- Internal refurbishment and re-arrangement of the existing Bed & Breakfast facility to accomodate 11 bedrooms (CA)

09/03822/LBC Priest House Sissinghurst Castle, Sissinghurst C/O Cranbrook Parish
- Listed Building Consent: Internal alterations to include rearrangement of bathrooms, kitchen and full rewire, heating and hot water systems (LB)

09/03869/HOUSE The Drift Groombridge Road, Speldhurst
- Two storey front extension (work commmenced) (CA)

(DEVPLN) Departure from the Development Plan (PROW) Affecting A Public Right of Way (CA) Affecting a Conservation Area (LB) Affecting a Listed Building (MAJOR) Major Applications (MAST) Mast Applications (EIA) Applications Accompanied by an EIA Statement.

You may view these applications on our website (www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk), at the The Old Fire Station, Stone Street, Cranbrook or at Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells. We accept comments online, by email to planningcomments@tunbridgewells.gov.uk or in writing to the address below. Comments should be made within 21 days from the date of this notice, although we may accept them after this date.

You should quote the reference and be aware that we make all comments available for inspection, placing them on the file and publishing them on the internet. We do not publish signatures, telephone numbers or email addresses on the internet.

Jim Kehoe
Head of Planning Services
Town Hall Royal Tunbridge Wells TN1 1RS

Dated: 19 December 2009

Highways - District of Ashford

A20 HYTHE ROAD (30 MPH SPEED LIMIT) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public and workforce whilst works are carried out, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic travelling at any speed in excess of 30mph, on the A20 Hythe Road, between the junctions with The Street/Tesco and Church Lane, Aldington.
The Order will be in force whilst road works are in progress and the appropriate signs are displayed on site. The Order comes into effect on or after 4 January 2010 and will remain in force for up to 18 months or until the works are complete.

TORRINGTON ROAD, ASHFORD (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING)TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of gas mains replacement, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on Torrington Road, Ashford, as shown in the schedule below, on or after 4 January 2010. This is for an estimated period of 10 weeks or until the works are complete.

Extent: between the junctions with Riversdale Road and Providence Street
Dates: 4 January 2010 for up to 3 weeks
Diversion: Riversdale Road, Whitfeld Road, Beaver Road and Torrington Road

Extent: between the junctions with Providence Street and Upper and Lower Denmark Road
Dates: 25 January 2010 for up to 3 weeks
Diversion: Torrington Road, Riversdale Road, Whitfeld Road, Beaver Road and Torrington Road

Extent: between the junctions with Upper and Lower Denmark Road and Beaver Road
Dates: 15 February 2010 for up to 3 weeks
Diversion: Whitfeld Road, Riversdale Road and Torrington Road

BYBROOK ROAD, ASHFORD (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of the installation of a new zebra crossing and carriageway resurfacing, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on Bybrook Road, Ashford, between and including the junctions of Grasmere Road and Belmont Road, on or after 4 January 2010. This is for an estimated period of up to 3 nights or until the works are complete, with works planned to be carried between the hours of 9.00 pm and 6.00 am.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Rylands Road and Grasmere Road (from the eastern end). Belmont Road can only be accessed from the Rylands Road junction.

Highways - District of Canterbury

SEA VIEW ROAD, HERNE BAY (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of the installation of a new wastewater pipeline, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Sea View Road, Herne Bay, as shown in the attached Schedule, on or after 4 January 2010. This is for an estimated period of up to 13 weeks or until the works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be as shown in the Schedule below

Road Name: Sea View Road
Extent: between the junctions with Beacon Hill and Beltinge Road
Dates: 4 January 2010 for up to 7 weeks
Diversion: Beacon Avenue and Beltinge Road

The following roads will each be closed at their junction with Sea View Road for approximately 2 weeks

Beacon Hill from 4 January 2010
Alma Road from 18 January 2010
Salisbury Road from 1 February 2010

When the junction is closed, each of these roads can be accessed from its junction with Beacon Hill

Road Name: Sea View Road
Extent: between the junctions with Beltinge Road and Reculver Road
Dates: 8 February 2010 for up to 8 weeks
Diversion: Southbound traffic via Beltinge Road and Cliff Avenue
Northbound via Reculver Road. Grange Road, Landon Road and Beltinge Road

Highways - Borough of Gravesham

SPRINGHEAD ROAD, NORTHFLEET (TEMPORARY RESTRICTION TRAFFIC ORDER) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Springhead Road, Northfleet from London Road to Thames Way.

The Order will become effective on 4th January 2010, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last 10 weeks. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: B2175 London Road and A226 Thames Way.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate 12" gas main replacement.

HIGHVIEW, MEOPHAM/VIGO (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Highview, Meopham/Vigo fronting 250 to 260.

The Order will become effective on 21st December 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last 2 days. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: Highview, Erskine Road, Highview.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate carriageway repairs to be safely undertaken.

Highways - Borough of Maidstone

STATION ROAD, MAIDSTONE (ONE WAY) ORDER 2009 (CYCLE LANE) ORDER 2009 ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

NOTICE is hereby given that Kent County Council in exercise of its powers has made an Order under Sections 1 and 2 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984; the effect of which has installed a contra flow cycle lane on a small section of Station Road, Maidstone.

A Copy of the Order which shall come into operation on Monday 28th December 2009, an explanatory statement and a map can be inspected during normal working hours at the Kent County Council Offices, Invicta House, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XX and at Maidstone Borough Council Offices, Civic Centre

Anyone may, by application to the High Court within 6 weeks of the date of publication of this Notice, challenge the validity of the Orders or of any provision contained in them on the grounds that it is not within the powers conferred by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, or of any instrument made there under, or that there has been a failure to comply with any statutory requirement in relation to the Order.

Highways - District of Sevenoaks

HORTON ROAD, SOUTH DARENTH (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Horton Road, South Darenth for approx 65 meters from the junction of New Road.

The Order will become effective on 4th January 2010, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last 11 months. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: Station Road Horton Kirby, Main Road Sutton at Hone, Cedar Drive Sutton at Hone, Devon Road Sutton at Hone and Holmesdale Road South Darenth.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate demolition followed by reconstruction.

Highways - District of Shepway

CANTERBURY ROAD, SELSTED (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because Carriageway Surfacing works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on Canterbury Road, Selsted from Selsted bends between Little Hatch and Woodland Cottages on or after 06 January 2010 for an estimated period of five nights or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via A20, A2.

This order will come into force on Wednesday 6 January 2010, will be in operation when the appropriate signs are erected, and will remain valid for a maximum period of eighteen months. The order will allow the above mentioned restrictions to be implemented as and when required for works of a similar nature at any time for the duration of the order.

Highways - District of Thanet

A28 CANTERBURY ROAD, BIRCHINGTON (PROHIBITION OF WAITING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of works near the road and the likelihood of danger to the public due to inappropriate parking, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting Waiting at any time on the A28 Canterbury Road, Birchington, outside The King Ethelbert School. This is on the westbound carriageway, from the point where Public Footpath TM26 meets the junction of the A28 for a distance of approximately 110 metres in an eastbound direction and approximately 20 metres in a westbound direction.

The Order is due to come into force on or after 4 January 2010 for a period of up to one year, or until the works are complete.

Highways - Borough of Tonbridge & Malling

CHURCH ROAD, OFFHAM (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Church Road, Offham on or after Monday 4th January 2010 for a period of up to 20 days or until such works are completed. Access will be available up to the railway bridge from Teston Road.

The alternative route for the restriction described above is via A20 London Road, B2016 Seven Mile Lane, Teston Road and vice versa.

South East Water Ltd, Southern Gas Networks and Reach Active apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary to provide new services, gas mains renewal scheme and fibre optic route protection. Should you require any further information regarding these works, the contacts are: South East Water - Amelia Fauklin on 01634 873084, Southern Gas Networks - Tony McPhilbin on 01233 714082 and Reach Active -Shaun Ewing on 0207 236 7870.

STATION ROAD, DITTON (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Station Road, Ditton on or after Tuesday 5th January 2010 for a period of up to 3 nights between 19:00hrs and 06:00hrs or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the restriction described above is via A20 London Road, Hall Road, Station Road and vice versa.

Kent Highway Services apologise for any inconvenience caused by these works, which are necessary for essential carriageway resurfacing works. Should you require any further information the Kent Highway Services contact is Robert Seggie on 08458 247 800.

KENT STREET, MEREWORTH (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Kent Street, Mereworth from the junction of A228 Malling Road for approximately 100m on or after Thursday 7th January 2010 for up to 3 days or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the restriction described above is for westbound traffic via A228 Malling Road, The Street, Butcher's Lane, Kent Street and for eastbound traffic vice versa.

South East Water apologise for any inconvenience caused by these works, which are necessary to carry out permanent reinstatement to the carriageway. Should you require any further information about these works, the contact is Nicola Stone of Clancy Docwra on 01634 873290.

NORMAN ROAD, WEST MALLING (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Norman Road, West Malling on or after Monday 4th January 2010 for a period of up to 5 days or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the restriction described above is for eastbound traffic via Sandy Lane, A20 London Road, Town Hill, King Street, High Street, West Street and for westbound traffic vice versa.

McNicholas Construction services Ltd apologise for any inconvenience caused by these works, which are necessary to provide a new duct for BT. Should you require any further information the contact is Kenton Stewart on 01795 437805.

Highways - Borough of Tunbridge Wells

CRYALS ROAD, BRENCHLEY (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Cryals Road, Brenchley on or after Monday 4th January 2010 for a period of up to 5 days or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the restriction described above is for westbound traffic via Tibbs Court Lane, Petteridge Lane, Cryals Road and for eastbound traffic vice versa.

EDF Energy apologise for any inconvenience caused by these works, which are necessary to install a new electrical supply. Should you require any further information the contact is Steve Bicknel of Murphy Ltd on 07920 150789.

SANDHURST ROAD, TUNBRIDGE WELLS (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2010 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Sandhurst Road between Upper Grosvenor Road and Oak Road on or after Monday 4th January 2010 for a period of up to 6 weeks or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the restriction described above is via Upper Grosvenor Road, Meadow Road, Goods Station Road, Grosvenor Road, A26 Mount Ephraim, A26 London Road, A264 Church Road, Crescent Road, Calverley Road, Prospect Road, Pembury Road, Sandhurst Road and vice versa.

Peter Brett Associates LLP apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary to reconstruct the carriageway, resurfacing and provide a new footway. Should you require any further information about these works, the contact is James Wallis on 01732 229600.

For further information, please contact Kent Highway Services, on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

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HIGHWAYS AGENCY

THE A21 TRUNK ROAD (TONBRIDGE TO PEMBURY DUALLING)
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER
COMPULSORY PURCHASE OF LAND AND RIGHTS BETWEEN TONBRIDGE AND PEMBURY IN KENT

Notice is hereby given that the Secretary of State for Transport has prepared in draft the A21 Trunk Road (Tonbridge to Pembury Dualling) Compulsory Purchase Order (No) 20 under sections 239, 240, 246 and 260 of the Highways Act 1980. He is about to make this Order, and if made, the Order will authorise the Secretary of State for Transport to purchase compulsorily the land and the new rights described below for the purpose of :-

a) the construction of the new trunk roads between Tonbridge and Pembury in the Parishes of Southborough in the Borough of Tonbridge and Malling and Capel, Pembury and Southborough in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells, all in the County of Kent in pursuance of the A21 Trunk Road (Tonbridge to Pembury Dualling) Order 20..;

b) the construction and improvement of highways and the provision of new means of access to premises in those Parishes and Boroughs in pursuance of the A21 Trunk Road (Tonbridge to Pembury Dualling Side Roads) Order 20..;

c) the improvement of the Trunk Road in those parishes and boroughs;

d) the diversion of watercourses and the execution of other works on watercourses in connection with the construction of the new trunk roads, the construction and improvement of other highways and the execution of other works mentioned above;

e) use by the Secretary of State for Transport in connection with such construction and improvement of highways and the execution of other works mentioned above; and

f) the mitigation of any adverse effects which the existence or use of the highways proposed to be constructed or improved will have on their surroundings.

Copies of the draft Order and of the map referred to therein, together with copies of the A21 Trunk Road (Tonbridge to Pembury Dualling) Order 20.. and the A21 Trunk Road (Tonbridge to Pembury Side Roads) Order 20.. have been deposited and may be seen at all reasonable hours from 11 December 2009 until 5 March 2010 at the Highways Agency, Major Projects (South), Federated House, London Road, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1SZ; Tonbridge Library, Avebury Avenue, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1TG; Pembury Library, The Hop House, Hemwood Green Road, Pembury, TN2 4HS; Tunbridge Wells Library, Mount Pleasant Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 1NS; Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 1RS; Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council Gateway, Tonbridge Castle, Castle Street, Tonbridge, TN9 1BG and Kent County Council Reception, Invicta House, County Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XX.

Any objection to the draft compulsory purchase order must be made in writing and addressed to the Secretary of State at the offices of the Highways Agency, Major Projects (South), Room 2A, Federated House, London Road, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1SZ to arrive before 5 March 2010 and should state the title of the Order and quote reference HA Ha/065/023/58. It should give the grounds of objection and the objector's address and interest in the land. In the preparation of an objection and the statement of grounds of objection, it should be borne in mind that the substance of any objection or representation may be communicated to other people who may be affected by it.

The contact for further information relating to this notice is Mr Graham Link (01306 878122 : graham.link@highways.gsi.gov.uk)

DESCRIPTION OF LAND AND THE NEW RIGHTS

Table 1

NOTE: (a) The land comprised in each item in this description is identified on the plan referred to in the draft Compulsory Purchase Order by means of the number or numbers shown in brackets against that item in this description.

(b) References to ownership are references to ownership or reputed ownership at the time of preparation of the draft Compulsory Purchase Order and are stated only for the purpose of identification of the land.

In the Parish of Capel in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells in the County of Kent

Woodland south of A21 Tonbridge By Pass and east of Vauxhall Lane, rights to enter to enable construction and maintenance of a balancing pond, landscape mitigation planting and maintenance all on land owned by **Mr F P and Mrs M J Banfield** (Plots 1/1a, 1/1b and 1/1c); Part of A21 Tonbridge ByPass and woodland eastwards from Vauxhall Road Bridge and west of A21 (T) Pembury Road and southeast of Top Lodge at Castle Hill owned by **West Kent Division of Kent Highway Services** (Plots 1/2e, 1/2f, 1/2g, 1/2h, 1/2j, 1/2k, 1/2l, 1/2m and 1/2n); Part of existing track off Vauxhall Lane south of A21 Tonbridge By Pass serving properties around Forest Farm owned by **Forest Farm Services Limited** (Plots 1/4c, 1/4d, 1/4e, 1/4f, 1/4g, 1/4h, 1/4j and 1/4k); Woodland, agricultural land south of A21 Tonbridge By Pass and east of Vauxhall Lane, right to enter for all purposes connected with the construction and maintenance of a balancing pond and landscape mitigation planting and maintenance all on land owned by **Woodland Investment Management Limited** (Plots 1/5a, 1/5b, 1/5c, 1/5d, 1/5e, 1/5f, 1/5g, 1/5h, 1/5j, 1/5k, 1/5l, 1/5m, 1/5n and 1/5o); Agricultural land south of A21 Tonbridge By Pass east Vauxhall Lane right to enter for all purposes connected with the construction and maintenance of a balancing pond and landscape mitigation planting and maintenance on land owned by **Mr and Mrs D G King** (Plots 1/6a, 1/6b, 1/6c, 1/6d, 1/6e, 1/6f, 1/6g, 1/6h, 1/6j, 1/6k, 1/6l, 1/6m, 1/6n, 1/6o, 1/6p, 1/6q and 1/6r); Part of existing driveway to Fish Lodge northeast of A21 Tonbridge By Pass at Castle Hill owned by **Mr M S Clarke** (Plot 1/7a); Agricultural land south of A21 (T) Pembury Road at King's Standing, part of existing access track to Castle Hill Wood owned by **Glendridge Estates Limited** (Plots 1/8a, 1/8b, 1/8c, 1/8d, 1/8e, 1/8f and 1/8g); Agricultural land south of A21 (T) Pembury Road at King's Standing owned by **Mr M S Uddin** (Plots 1/9a, 1/9b and 1/9c); Agricultural land south of A21 (T) Pembury Road at King's Standing owned by **Mr A P and Mrs K A Patel** (Plot 1/10a); Agricultural land south of A21 (T) Pembury Road northwest Castle Hill Wood owned by **Mr W M Netto and Mr C G Netto** (Plots 1/11a, 1/11b and 1/11c); Agricultural land south of A21 (T) Pembury Road northwest Castle Hill Wood owned by **Mr J J Cooney** (Plots 1/12a and 1/12b); Agricultural land south of A21 (T) Pembury Road northwest Castle Hill Wood owned by **Mr M G Patel & Mrs U Patel** (Plots 1/13a and 1/13b); Agricultural land south of A21 (T) Pembury Road northwest Castle Hill Wood owned by **Mr S Jarmakani** (Plots 1/14a and 1/14b); Agricultural land south of A21 (T) Pembury Road northwest Castle Hill Wood owned by **Mr A A Kazma** (Plots 1/15a, 1/15b, 1/15c and 1/15d); Agricultural land south of A21 (T) Pembury Road northwest Castle Hill Wood owned by **Mr J Patel** (Plot 1/16a); Agricultural land south of A21 (T) Pembury Road northwest Castle Hill Wood owned by **Mr I D Braisby** (Plot 1/17a); Agricultural land south of A21 (T) Pembury Road northwest Castle Hill Wood owned by **Mr A Sanson** (Plot 1/18a); Agricultural land south of A21 (T) Pembury Road northwest Castle Hill Wood owned by **Tiara Limited** (Plots 1/19a and 1/19b); Woodland south A21 (T) Pembury Road forming part of Castle Hill Wood, woodland west of A21 (T) Pembury Road at Well Wood and part FP 192A, right to enter for all purposes in connection with the construction and maintenance of a cut slope strengthened by ground anchors, right to enter for all purposes connected with landscape mitigation planting and maintenance on land owned by **The Trustees of the John Malcolm Guthries 1965 Settlement Castlehill Woodland and Well Wood** (Plots 1/20a, 1/20b, 1/20c, 1/20d, 1/20e, 1/20f, 1/20g, 1/20h, 1/20j, 3/2a, 3/2b and 3/2c); Woodland and part access to estate and Top Lodge north A21 (T) Pembury Road, Woodland forming part of Burgess Rough north A21 (T) Pembury Road, residential property and garden known as Burgess Hill Cottage, agricultural land northeast A21 (T) Pembury Road at Castle Hill, part woodland, woodland track and agricultural land east A21 (T) Pembury Road at Potters Wood, agricultural land west A21 (T) Pembury Road and Carpenters Cottage right to enter for all purposes connected with the construction and maintenance of a balancing pond and landscape mitigation planting and maintenance on land owned by **The Smith & Williamson Trust Corporation Limited and GSE Trustees Limited** (Plots 1/21a, 1/21b, 1/21c, 1/21d, 1/21e, 1/21f, 1/21g, 1/21h, 1/21j, 1/21k, 1/21l, 2/3a, 2/3b, 2/3c, 2/3d, 2/3e, 2/3f, 3/1a, 3/1b and 3/1c); Property and garden known as Burgess Hill Farmhouse, part equestrian manege northeast A21 (T) Pembury Road at Castle Hill owned by **The Secretary of State for Transport** (Plots 1/22a, 2/1a and 2/1b); Agricultural land, tree plantation east A21 (T) Pembury Road south of Burgess Hill Farm, right to enter for all purposes connected with landscape mitigation planting and maintenance on land owned by **Ms R C Teacher** (Plots 2/2a, 2/2b, 2/2c, 2/2d, 2/2e, 2/2f, 2/2g, 2/2h and 2/2j); Agricultural land west of A21 (T) Pembury Road and north FP 192A owned by **Mr J D Tyler** (Plots 3/8b and 3/8c)

In the Parish of Southborough in the Borough of Tonbridge and Malling in the County of Kent

Woodland and verge to existing track south of A21 Tonbridge By Pass and east of Vauxhall Lane owned by **Mr F P and Mrs M J Banfield (**Plots 1/1d and 1/1e); Woodland and verge to existing track south of A21 Tonbridge By Pass and east of Vauxhall Lane right to enter for all purposes connected with the construction and maintenance of a balancing pond and landscape mitigation planting and maintenance owned by **West Kent Division of Kent Highway Services** (Plots 1/2a, 1/2b and 1/2c); Verge to existing track east of Vauxhall Lane and South of A21 Tonbridge By Pass owned by **Mrs A D Tyler and Ms B F Bursell** (Plot 1/3a); Part of existing track off Vauxhall Lane south of A21 Tonbridge By Pass serving properties around Forest Farm owned by **Forest Farm Services Limited (C/o Mr J P Milgate)** (Plots 1/4a and 1/4b); Agricultural land south of A21 (T) Pembury Road east Vauxhall Lane, right to enter of agricultural land south of A21 (T) Pembury Road south Vauxhall Lane to re-grade and reduce the land levels as a flood compensation area on land owned by **Mr J D Tyler** (Plots 1/23a and 1/23b)

In the Parishes of Southborough in the Borough of Tonbridge and Malling and Capel in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells in the County of Kent

Woodland south of A21 Tonbridge By Pass and east of Vauxhall Lane owned by **Mr F P and Mrs M J Banfield** (Plot 1/1f); Part of A21 Tonbridge By Pass eastwards from Vauxhall Road Bridge owned by **West Kent Division of Kent Highway Services** (Plot 1/2d); Agricultural land south of A21 Tonbridge By Pass east Vauxhall Lane owned by **Mr and Mrs D G King** (Plot 1/6c)

In the Parishes of Capel and Pembury in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells in the County of Kent

Part existing track east A21 (T) Pembury Road at Potters Wood owned by **The Smith & Williamson Trust Corporation Limited and GSE Trustees Limited** (Plot 2/3g); Woodland south A21 (T) Pembury Road forming part of Castle Hill Wood on land owned by T**he Trustees of the John Malcolm Guthries 1965 Settlement Castlehill Woodland and Well Wood** (Plot 2/4a); Woodland and agricultural land west of A21 (T) Pembury Road and north of Castle Hill Farm owned by **West Kent Division of Kent Highway Services** (Plots 2/5a and 2/5b)

In the Parish of Pembury in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells in the County of Kent

Part agricultural land east A21 (T) Pembury Road at Potters Wood, part existing farm track off Dislingbury Road east A21 (T) Pembury Road, part Dislingbury Road and verges at junction with A21 (T) Pembury Road, woodland east A21 (T) north and south of Pembury Walks, existing farm access track east of A21 (T) Pembury Road north of Longfield Road, woodland east of A21 (T) Pembury Road and east of Tonbridge Road, right to enter for all purposes connected with landscape mitigation planting and maintenance owned by **The Smith & Williamson Trust Corporation Limited and GSE Trustees Limited** (Plots 2/3h, 2/3j, 2/3k, 2/3l, 2/3m, 2/3n, 2/3o, 2/3p, 2/3q, 2/3r, 2/3s, 2/3t, 2/3u, 4/7a and 4/7b); Woodland and verge east A21 (T) Pembury Road north of Dislingbury Road, Dislingbury Road Woodland and verge east A21 (T) Pembury Road north of Pembury Walks, part Pembury Walks east A21 (T) Pembury Road, part of existing A21 (T) Pembury Road and Tonbridge Road junction east of A21 (T) Pembury Road, woodland south of Knights Park Road and west of A21 (T) Pembury Road owned by **West Kent Division of Kent Highway Services** (Plots 2/5a, 2/5b, 2/5c, 2/5d, 2/5e, 2/5f, 2/5g, 2/5h, 2/5j, 2/5k, 4/5b, 4/5c, 4/5h, 4/5j and 4/5k); Woodland west of A21 (T) Pembury Road at North Lodge south of FP WT 192A, right to enter for all purposes connected with landscape mitigation planting and maintenance on land owned by **Mr F E Newham and Mr H Gillow** (Plots 3/3a, 3/3b, 3/3c, 3/3d, 3/3e and 3/3f); Property known as North Lodge and garden to property west of A21 (T) Pembury Road owned by **Mrs P Mundy** (Plot 3/4a); Part existing track west of A21 (T) Pembury Road south of North Lodge, part of access track west of A21 (T) Pembury Road forming part of property known as Colebrooke, Woodland west of A21 (T) Pembury Road and north of Longfield Road, right to enter for all purposes connected with landscape mitigation planting and maintenance on land owned by **Gardena Ltd (**Plots 3/5a, 3/5b, 3/5f, 3/5h, 3/5j, 3/5k, 3/5l, 3/5m, 3/5n, 3/5o, 3/5p, 4/1a, 4/1b, 4/1c, 4/1d, 4/1e, 4/1f, 4/1g and 4/1h); Part of woodland garden to property known as Garden Cottage west of A21 (T) Pembury Road owned by **Mr G Russell & Mrs J Russell** (Plots 3/6a, 3/6b, 3/6c, 3/6d, 3/6e, 3/6f, 3/6g, 3/6h, 3/6j, 3/6k, 3/6l and 3/6m); Part of garden to property known as The Coach House west of A21 (T) Pembury Road owned by Mr **R J Lamb & Mrs J M Lamb** (Plot 3/7a); Agricultural land east of A21 (T) Pembury Road and north of Yew Tree Farm owned by **Ms R C Teacher** (Plots 4/2a, 4/2b, 4/2c and 4/2d); Woodland west of A21 (T) Pembury Road and north of Longfield Road owned by **Mr J D Tyler** (Plot 4/3b); Property and outbuildings known as Middle Lodge north of Longfield Road and west of A21 (T) Pembury Road owned by **Mr M Greenwood & Mrs M Greenwood** (Plot 4/4a); Woodland east of A21 (T) Pembury Road and west of Tonbridge Road owned by **Kilmartin Property Group Limited** (Plot 4/6b)

In the Parishes of Pembury and Southborough in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells in the County of Kent

Part existing track west of A21 (T) Pembury Road south of North Lodge, right to enter for all purposes connected with landscape mitigation planting and maintenance on land owned by **Gardena Ltd** (Plots 3/5c, 3/5e and 3/5g); Agricultural land west of A21 (T) Pembury Road and north of Longfield Road owned by **Mr J D Tyler** (Plots 4/3a, 4/3c and 4/3d); Woodland south of property known as Middle Lodge west of A21 (T) Pembury Road and north of Longfield Road owned by **Mr M Greenwood & Mrs M Greenwood** (Plot 4/4b); Part of Longfield Road and west of A21 (T) Pembury Road owned by **West Kent Division of Kent Highway Services** (Plot 4/5a); Woodland west of A21 (T) Pembury Road and south of Longfield Road owned by **Kilmartin Property Group Limited** (Plots 4/6a and 4/6o)

In the Parish of Southborough in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells in the County of Kent

Part existing track west of A21 (T) Pembury Road south of North Lodge owned by **Gardena Ltd** (Plot 3/5d); Agricultural land west of A21 (T) Pembury Road and south FP 192A, agricultural land west of A21 (T) Pembury Road and north of Longfield Road owned by **Mr J D Tyler** (Plots 3/8a, 3/8d , 4/3e, 4/3f, 4/3g, 4/3h, 4/3j, 4/3k, 4/3l and 4/3m); Part of existing Longfield Road west of A21 (T) Pembury Road, part of Knights Park west of A21 (T) Pembury Road south of Longfield Road owned by **West Kent Division of Kent Highway Services** (Plots 4/5d, 4/5e, 4/5f and 4/5g); Woodland south of Longfield Road and west of A21 (T) Pembury Road, woodland and existing track west of A21 (T) Pembury Road and south of Longfield Road, Woodland known as Robingate Wood south of Longfield Road and west of A21 (T) Pembury Road, right to enter for all purposes connected with landscape mitigation planting and maintenance on land owned by **Kilmartin Property Group Limited** (Plots 4/6c, 4/6d, 4/6e, 4/6f, 4/6g, 4/6h, 4/6j, 4/6k, 4/6l, 4/6m, 4/6n, 4/6p, 4/6q and 4/6r)

Table 2

In the Parish of Capel in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells in the County of Kent

Mr J Liddell-Simpson & Others & South Eastern Gas Board (Private gas Main) (1/9c and 1/9d); Trustees of the John Malcolm Guthries 1965 Settlement Castlehill Woodland & Well Wood, Tonbridge (access rights to A21) (1/15c and 3/1c); National Grid Wireless Limited (access rights to mast site) (1/20h); Forestry Commission (Woodland) (2/3e and 2/3f)

In the Parish of Pembury in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells in the County of Kent

Forestry Commission (Woodland) (2/3l, 2/3m, 2/3n, 2/3o, 2/3p, 2/3q, 2/3s, 2/3t, 2/3u, 4/2a and 4/2d); The Woolwich (Mortgagee) (3/6a, 3/6b, 3/6c, 3/6d, 3/6e, 3/6f, 3/6g, 3/6h, 3/6j, 3/6k, 3/6l and 3/6m)

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Vauxhall's 'Beast' is a cult car in waiting

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VauxhallInsigniaVXR

ON FIRST learning of Vauxhall's Insignia VXR performance flagship, I called it 'The Beast'.

After all, previous VXR versions of standard Vauxhall production models have tended to be a bit raw, exemplified by the VXR8 monster V8 Aussie import – popularly known as 'The Thunder from Down Under'.

But if the VXR8 is Crocodile Dundee, the new Insignia VXR is more James Bond; a subtle performer designed to take out German performance models for a lot less money (from £30,995) than, say, BMW's £65,000 M5.

Any lingering thoughts that this 325bhp super saloon, hatch or estate is a hooligan designed to highlight rather than add real numbers to the Insignia's dominance of the mainstream family car sector this year, are quickly dispelled behind the wheel.

It sits on an all-wheel-drive chassis, will hit 60mph in under six seconds and can be pushed to limits that you ought not to try on public roads, yet the engine rumbles rather than roars and the ride is far from riotous – thank goodness.

In short, Vauxhall has created a cut-price performance car for everyday use.

It could signal a change of policy by Vauxhall about what VXR should stand for – especially now that the brand has dropped out of racing.

The VXR's tidy handling was apparently fine-tuned on the gruelling Nürburgring circuit in Germany though. It also sits 10mm lower than the SRi – the previous Insignia performance star – and boasts several smart chassis features.

A special front suspension has been developed to improve cornering and grip and reduce any unruliness transmitted through the steering wheel, while the 'Adaptive 4x4' system also aims to tame any waywardness.

The VXR's looks add to its value-for-money pitch; a hefty yet restrained bodykit complements sleek Insignia styling and the package also brings 19-inch alloys – lightweight 20-inch forged alloys are a tempting £1,100 extra – Brembo brakes with colour-keyed callipers, vented/cross-drilled discs and beefy dual matt chrome exhausts.

There is no doubt of the car's sporting credentials inside either, thanks to Recaro front seats plus lots of VXR branding and a classy yet practical finish.

However, the VXR's more humble and numerous sisters and the mainstream griffin badge on the front might suggest higher depreciation than perceived rivals with a snobby German badge but, hey, look at the upfront price.

And it could become a bit of a cult car like Vauxhall's legendary 177mph Lotus Carlton of the early 1990s – faster than the VXR, but also costing an astonishing £44,000 at the time too.

As we contemplate a world of lower emissions and consumption – and I'm not arguing against restraint – it is nice to know that there is still room for a quality performance model like the new VXR.

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Model shown is Yeti S 1.2 TSI 105bhp at £14,675 RRP, including optional metallic paint at £400 RRP. Prices are accurate at time of print.
Official fuel consumption in mpg (litres/100km) for the Škoda Range: Urban 19.2 (14.7) – 53.3 (5.3), Extra-urban 38.2 (7.4) – 83.1 (3.4), Combined 28.0 (10.1) – 68.9 (4.1). CO_2 emissions for the Škoda Range 109 – 235g/km.

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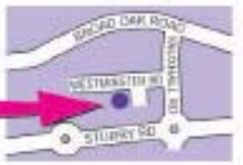

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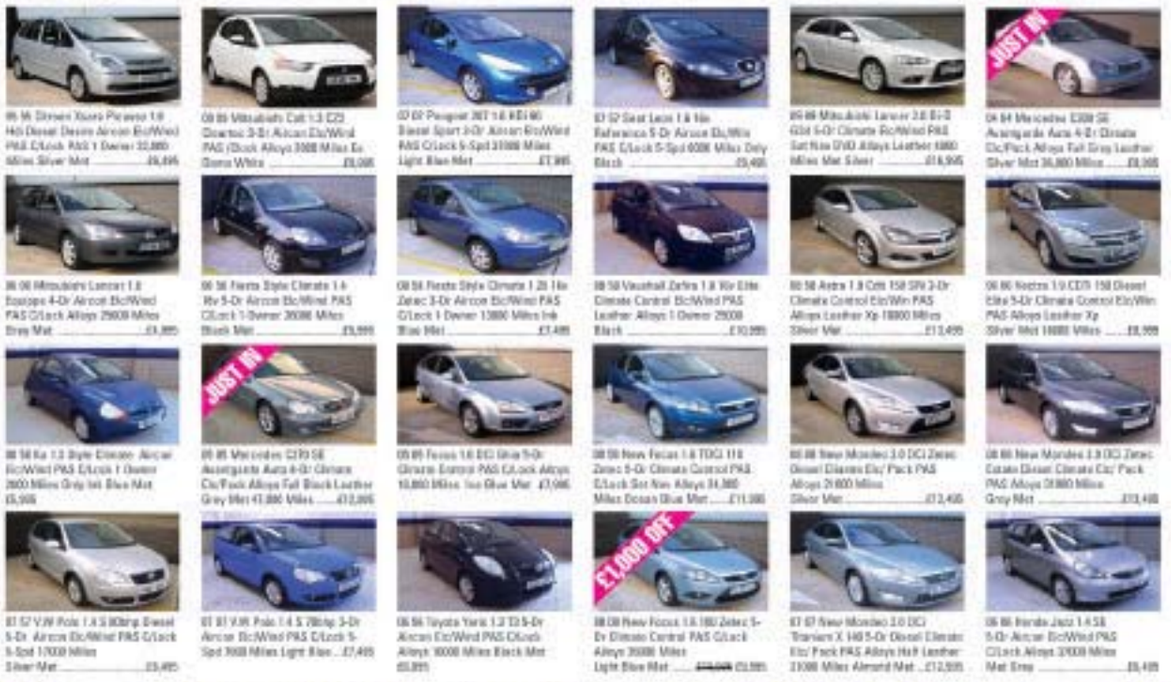

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AGILA

Year	Reg No	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
05	55	Agila Expression	1.0	5	Star silver	24,800	3,695
08	58	Agila Club A/c	1.2	5	Steel Silver	4,385	7,995
09	09	Agila Design Auto	1.2	5	Sugar white	2,290	9,695
09	09	Agila Design 1.2	5		Lemon grass	4,150	8,995
09	09	Agila Design CDTi	1.3D	5	Atlanta blue	6,230	9,995
09	09	Agila Design CDTi	1.3D	5	Star silver	5,210	9,995
09	09	Agila Design 1.2	5		Morcan Blue	2,375	8,295
09	59	Agila Design CDTi	1.3D	5	Atlanta Blue	Del mileage	£10,995
09	5	Agila Design CDTi	1.3D	5	Sugar white	Del mileage	£10,995

CORSA

Year	Reg No	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
00	76	Corsa Comfort Auto	1.4	3	Star silver	69,325	2,995
06	56	Corsa Design	1.4	5	Silver ligthning	39,050	5,995
07	57	Corsa Design	1.2	3	Air blue	21,575	7,495
07	57	Corsa Design CDTi	1.3D	5	Air blue	25800	8,495
08	57	Corsa VXR	1.6	3	Arden blue	14,950	12,995
08	08	Corsa Breeze	1.2	3	Star silver	12,220	7,995
08	58	Corsa Sxi CDTi A/c	1.3	5	Silver ligthning	12775	9,495
08	58	Corsa Design CDTi	1.3	3	Metro blue	6,425	9,495
09	58	Corsa Sxi A/c	1.4	5	Metro blue	11,390	8,995
08	58	Corsa Sxi A/c	1.4	5	Black sapphire	7,070	9,295
09	09	Corsa Sxi CDTi A/C	1.3	3	Black sapphire	9,670	9,650
09	09	Corsa Sxi CDTi A/c	1.3	3	Flame red	9,270	9,650
09	09	Corsa Active	1.2	5	Silver ligthning	6,520	8,995
09	09	Corsa Sxi	1.2	3	Black sapphire	6,236	9,495
09	09	Corsa Design In Touch	1.2	3	Black sapphire	3,380	9,495
09	59	Corsa Active CDTi	1.3D	3	Black sapphire	Del mileage	£9,995
09	59	Corsa Active CDTi	1.3D	3	Metro blue	Del mileage	£9,995
09	59	Corsa Sxi A/c	1.4	3	Star silver	Del mileage	£10,595
09	59	Corsa Life A/c CDTi	1.3D	5	Star silver	Del mileage	£10,895

TIGRA

Year	Reg No	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
06	06	Tigra Exclusive	1.4	2	Air blue	30,500	8,995

VECTRA

Year	Reg No	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
06	06	Vectra elite CDTi (150)	1.9D	5	Black sapphire	38,125	8,995
07	07	Vectra Exclusiv CDTi Auto	1.9D	5	Silver ligthning	19,350	8,995
08	58	Vectra Exclusive	1.8	5	Black sapphire	15,390	9,495

ASTRA

Year	Reg No	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
06	06	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	1.6	3	Black sapphire	22,675	7,995
06	56	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	1.6	3	Panacotta	21,950	8,995
06	56	Astra Active	1.6	5	Silver ligthning	36,800	7,495
07	57	Astra Sri Ex Pack	1.8	5	Black sapphire	26,000	9,495
07	57	Astra Design Auto	1.8	5	Moonland	7,825	9,495
08	08	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Black sapphire	15,890	9,495
08	08	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	1.4	3	Flame red	11,225	10,495
08	58	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Green spirit	3,725	10,495
08	58	Astra Sri X Pack	1.8	3	Black sapphire	5,960	12,495
08	58	Astra Sri TBO X Pack	1.6	3	Metro blue	8,300	12,995
09	09	Astra Breeze Plus	1.6	5	Metro blue	5,950	9,995
09	09	Astra Breeze CDTi	1.7D	5	Metro blue	4,720	10,895
09	09	Astra Breeze CDTi	1.7D	5	Silver ligthning	7,190	10,845
09	09	Astra Breeze Sports hatch	1.7D	3	Black sapphire	6,250	11,695
09	09	Astra Sxi	1.4	5	Flame red	2,,500	9,995
09	59	Astra Sxi Sports Hatch	1.6	3	Silver ligthning	Del mileage	£13,695
09	58	Astra Sxi	1.4	5	Technical grey	Del mileage	£12,995
09	59	Astra Life A/c	1.6	5	Metro blue	Del mileage	£12,495
09	59	Astra Active	1.4	5	Black sapphire	Del mileage	£12,295
09	59	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Black sapphire	Del mileage	£13,495
09	59	Astra Sxi Sport hatch	1.6	3	Grey	Del mileage	£13,695

MERIVA

Year	Reg No	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
06	56	Meriva Life A/C	1.4	5	Steel blue	19,730	6,995
07	57	Meriva Design CDTi	1.7D	5	Star silver	34,950	8,995
08	58	Meriva CDTi Breeze Plus	1.3	5	Black sapphire	10,930	9,995
09	09	Meriva Active CDTi	1.3D	5	Ultra blue	8,750	10,695

ZAFIRA

Year	Reg No	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
04	54	Zafira Design DTi	2.0D	5	Prestige blue	67,850	5,495
05	05	Zafira Design CDTi	1.9D	5	Star silver	66,000	7,795
06	56	Zafira Club	1.6	5	Metro blue	40,250	7,995
06	56	Zafira Club Auto	1.8	5	Silver ligthning	12,120	8,495
09	09	Zafira Sri XP CDTi	1.9D	5	Star silver	3,780	17,995

DUE SOON

Year	Reg No	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
07	57	Vectra CDTi Elite (150ps)	1.9D	5	Black sapphire	41,000	9,995
08	58	Astra Sri Sports hatch CDTi	1.9D	3	Power red	16,000	13,495
08	58	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Flame red	12,000	10,495

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FIRST GEAR

Compiled by Matthew Beech

Saab's 4x4 solution is 10 years too late

TEN years ago, the likes of Audi, Volvo and Subaru would have been a bit narked by the Saab 9-3X.

It's a stylish all-wheel drive sporting estate that is fun to drive and has an upmarket badge on the bonnet – Saab should have sold loads.

Somehow though, the Swedes or their masters in the General Motors empire did not have the will or vision to launch a car like it.

Still, better late than never and the 9-3X, based on the existing 9-3 Sport Wagon, is a neat and sure-footed drive, though the gearshift feels a bit sloppy.

The rest of the car seems robust and lively though, with the 208bhp turbocharged two-litre petrol engine taking the car from 0-60mph in 8.2 seconds.

The car (£25,995) also looks good value against conventional sport wagon rivals, especially with a spec list that includes half-leather seats, chunky body kit and heated front seats.

Whether it can do much to ease Saab's plight is debatable though; GM has sought to offload the innovative marque for some time, but a sale to Sweden's Koenigsegg supercar brand fell through recently.

One for green van man?

EVEN vans are going eco and Ford has upped the ante with a cargo version of its ultra-green Fiesta ECOnetic.

It has the lowest CO2 emissions of its segment (98g/km) and an official combined fuel economy of 76.3mpg, which amounts to a saving of 35 gallons of fuel a year over its predecessor model, according to Ford.

The ECOnetic is priced from £11,635 and benefits from lowered suspension, low rolling resistance tyres and a specially-calibrated Duratorq 1.6-litre TDCi diesel engine for its miserly ways.

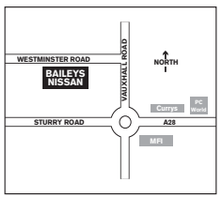
Qashqai highlights its British appeal

NISSAN is now the biggest carmaker in Britain – around a quarter of the new cars produced here in 2008 came out of the Japanese marque's Sunderland plant.

Perhaps even more remarkable is how many of those are Qashqai crossovers, a range that now accounts for a sixth of cars built in the UK and underlines Nissan's wisdom in dropping three old models in favour of the Qasqhai's 'one size fits all' philosophy.

Though launched as recently as 2007, Nissan also plans to keep it competitive with a slick facelift for 2010 that includes a green 'Pure Drive' version with 129g/km CO2 emissions and also continues to offer the normal five-seat line-up plus the seven-seat Qashqai +2 models.

Prices start from £15,395 with the excellent diesels from £16,795.



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Avensis may be an automatic choice

MiniTest by STEVELOADER

ToyotaAvensis

TOYOTA'S latest Avensis is a far superior all-round product to its predecessor – it has to be.

There is no room for also-rans now in the ultra-competitive family model or 'Mondeo class' where a once huge market share has been hunted down by 4x4s, MPVs and executive class rivals.

Where its two predecessors could afford to be less than sexy by majoring instead on Toyota's key attributes – reliability, economy and practicality – the new car launched earlier this year needed to cut a dash and be brave in its market approach.

It succeeded on both counts with sharp, aggressive new lines that show how dated the old car had become, plus a decision to drop the hatchback option in favour of a straight choice between classy saloon and Tourer (estate) – Toyota is confident the latter will contribute 50 per cent of sales.

I can't argue with that; the estate has rakish style yet loses nothing in practicality and drives better than before, helped by an extended wheelbase and track within similar overall dimensions.

It is still no Mondeo beater to drive – it charts more of a middle course between driver appeal and a passenger-pleasing ride – but the Toyota offers cheap running costs thanks to the Japanese motor giant's 'Optimal Drive' technology, evolved after taking a long look at the way powertrains are constructed.

This was crucial to designing the brand's tiny IQ city car, but has filtered through to larger models, so new Avensis engines feature low-friction components, lighter and more compact design elements and enhanced combustion, adding up to lower emissions and better economy plus flexibility.

The 150bhp 2.2 diesel high spec T4 Tourer (£23,985) test car loaned by Motorline at Canterbury proved the point; it is a lively yet refined unit and now available with a superb six-speed auto gearbox.

Admittedly, the self-changer lifts emissions from 150g/km for the manual to 175, annual road tax from £125 to £175 and the Benefit in Kind bill from 21 to 25 per cent, but the gains in convenience are impressive.

It is also driving extra Avensis sales according to Motorline's Canterbury manager Robert Hobbs.

"We have one of the few demonstrators in the UK with the 2.2 engine mated to the seamless automatic gearbox," he said.

"The smoothness and 'torqueyness' of the responsive engine have impressed everyone who has driven it, taking lots of conquest business from VW Passat and Renault Laguna."

News of the Renault's sidelining comes as no surprise, but the VW is no pushover even in its twilight years; the Toyota pitch is helped though by an upmarket and roomy interior, with the Tourer making best use of the current trend for divergence between the roof line and rearmost window frames to deliver a rakish rear end as well as decent headroom.

It is a decent five-seater too, having a large load space with copious under-floor stowage, a ski slot and two side compartments for corralling the usual load space flotsam.

The sharply angled rear tailgate line robs some upper level load space though.

DrivingPortfolio

TOYOTA AVENSIS 2.2D-CAT T4 TOURER £23,985

Driving appeal	★★★★
Image	★★★★
Space	★★★★
Value	★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
How green?	★★★★★
Road tax	£175/year
Best rival	Ford Mondeo

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Rochester		Was	Now	Save
09/09	207 CC Sport 1.6, Lacerta Yellow, 5390 Miles	£13495	£11995	£1500
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09/07	207 1.4 mcplay 5Dr, Neysha Blue, 25000 Miles	£8495	£7190	£1305
08/58	207 5 Dr Sport 1.4 8V 75, Montebello Blue, 2968 Miles	£9495	£7995	£1500
09/07	207 5 5Dr 1.4 16V 90 A/C, Flamenco Red, 12795 Miles	£7995	£6690	£1305
08/58	308 SW Sport Hdi 110, Lunar Mist, 14747 Miles	£13995	£11995	£2000
02/07	207 SE 1.4 16V 90, Slate Grey, 20441 Miles	£7995	£6890	£1105
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57/07	207 SW 1.4 5 VTi, Neysha Blue, 12013 miles	£9250	£8490	£760
07/07	207 Sport 1.6 HDi 90, Salamanca, 29157 miles	£8990	£7990	£1000
08/08	207 SW 1.6 VTi Auto, Onyx Black, 7014 miles	£11990	£10490	£1500
06/06	206 1.6 CC Allure, Moonstone, 48000 miles	£8990	£6990	£2000
07/07	207 1.4 5 16V, Aegean Blue, 20268 miles	£8490	£7650	£840
56/06	107 1.0 Urban, Zircon Grey, 15816 miles	£5990	£5490	£500
07/07	207 CC 1.6 GT 120, Onyx Black, 25603 miles	£12490	£11490	£1000
56/06	207 1.4 S, Montebello, 25248 miles	£7250	£6490	£760
Canterbury		**Was**	**Now**	**Save**
07/57	107 Sport XS 1.0 3Dr, Raven Black, 15849 miles	£6995	£5995	£1000
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06/56	207 Sport 1.4 3Dr, Montebelloblue, 12212 miles	£7695	£6694	£1001
07/07	207 Sport 1.4 3Dr, Onyx Black, 32264 miles	£7995	£6876	£1119
08/57	207 M Play 1.4 5Dr, Aluminium, 9978 miles	£8695	£7874	£821
07/57	207 M Play 1.4 5Dr, Neysha Blue, 24777 miles	£7995	£6994	£1001
05/05	307 CC 2.0 Leather, Aluminium, 43006 miles	£8995	£7978	£1018
08/08	207 GT 150, Neysha Blue, 22234 miles	£10995	£9982	£1003
07/07	207 CC GT 150 Leather, Thorium Grey, 23199 miles	£12495	£11466	£1029
09/09	4007 GT HDi 2.2 Sat Nav, Pearl Black, 11129 miles	£20995	£19976	£1019

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FABIA CLASSIC 5DR HATCH	1.2 12v 64 BHP (PETROL)	GN04YZA	JUNE '04	24342	GRAPHITE GREY	£4,990.00
FABIA CLASSIC 5DR HATCH	1.2 12v 64 BHP (PETROL)	GF56UZS	DECEMBER '06	65042	DYNAMIC BLUE	£4,990.00
FABIA AMBIENTE 5DR HATCH	1.2 12v 64 BHP (PETROL)	KX55GYG	SEPTEMBER '05	36164	SATIN GREY	£5,490.00
FABIA AMBIENTE 5DR HATCH	1.2 12v 64 BHP (PETROL)	GL56XKB	JANUARY '07		CORRIDA RED	£6,490.00
FABIA SPORT 5DR HATCH	1.4 16v 75 BHP (PETROL)	GF05PHX	MAY '05		DYNAMIC BLUE	£5,990.00
FABIA 1 5DR HATCH	1.2 12v 70 BHP (PETROL)	GD07CDV	JULY '07	17178	SATIN GREY	£7,290.00
FABIA 1 5DR HATCH	1.4 TDi 80 BHP (DIESEL)	GJ57WCG	OCTOBER '07	4954	SATIN GREY	£8,490.00
FABIA 2 5DR HATCH	1.2 12v 70 BHP (PETROL)	GN57VVL	SEPTEMBER '07	9339	CAPPUCCINO BEIGE	£7,990.00
● FABIA 2 5DR HATCH	1.2 12v 70 BHP (PETROL)	GK09YFU	MARCH '09	TBA	STORM BLUE	£8,490.00
● FABIA 2 5DR HATCH	1.6 16v AUTO (PETROL)	GL09ARZ	JUNE '09	TBA	ARCTIC GREEN	£9,490.00
FABIA 2 5DR HATCH	1.4 TDi 80 BHP (DIESEL)	GD07CDX	JULY '07	12469	FLAMENCO RED	£8,990.00
FABIA 2 5DR HATCH	1.4 TDi 80 BHP (DIESEL)	GL57YKK	JANUARY '08	7045	SATIN GREY	£8,990.00
● FABIA 2 5DR HATCH	1.4 TDi 80 BHP (DIESEL)	GJ58SYG	SEPTEMBER '08	TBA	TANGERINE ORANGE	£8,990.00
● FABIA 2 5DR HATCH	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	GJ58SYS	SEPTEMBER '08	TBA	SATIN GREY	£9,490.00
● FABIA 2 5DR HATCH	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	GJ58SYR	SEPTEMBER '08	TBA	CAPPUCCINO BEIGE	£9,490.00
● FABIA 2 5DR HATCH	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	GL09APO	JULY '09	TBA	TANGERINE ORANGE	£9,990.00
FABIA 3 5DR HATCH	1.4 16v 85 BHP (PETROL)	GL57TMU	DECEMBER '07	10656	ANTHRACITE GREY	£9,290.00
FABIA 3 5DR HATCH	1.6 16v 105 BHP (PETROL)	GK57YRU	SEPTEMBER '07	6039	BLACK MAGIC	£9,790.00
FABIA CLASSIC 5DR ESTATE	1.4 MPi 68 BHP (PETROL)	GK51FWH	NOVEMBER '01	73453	STONE GREY	£3,490.00

MODEL	ENGINE	REG	YEAR	MILES	COLOUR	PRICE
FABIA AMBIENTE 5DR ESTATE	1.4 16v 100 BHP (PETROL)	GK56VDG	SEPTEMBER '06		CAPPUCCINO BEIGE	£6,990.00
FABIA AMBIENTE 5DR ESTATE	1.4 TDi 75 BHP (DIESEL)	EJ05DGF	APRIL '05	44489	SAHARA BEIGE	£5,990.00
FABIA AMBIENTE 5DR ESTATE	1.4 TDi 75 BHP (DIESEL)	GK05OKG	MARCH '05	34327	STONE GREY	£6,290.00
FABIA ELEGANCE 5DR ESTATE	1.4 16v 100BHP (PETROL)	GJ06CFN	MARCH '06	6345	SAHARA BEIGE	£7,290.00
FABIA BLUELINE 5DR ESTATE	1.2 12v 64 BHP (PETROL)	LY03VVG	AUGUST '03	88394	ADMIRAL BLUE	£3,290.00
ROOMSTER LEVEL 2 5DR MPV	1.4 16v 85BHP (PETROL)	GL56HZR	DECEMBER '06	80713	OCEAN BLUE	£5,490.00
● ROOMSTER LEVEL 2 5DR MPV	1.6 16v AUTO (PETROL)	GJ09NLF	MARCH '09	TBA	POLAR BLUE	£9,990.00
ROOMSTER LEVEL 2 5DR MPV	1.4 TDi 80 BHP (DIESEL)	GL56HZA	DECEMBER '06		CORRIDA RED	£7,990.00
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OCTAVIA AMBIENTE 5DR HATCH	1.6 FSi 115 BHP (PETROL)	GJ56TWD	SEPTEMBER '06	FLAMENCO RED		£7,490.00
● OCTAVIA ELEGANCE 5DR HATCH	1.6 FSi 105 BHP (PETROL)	GK58NNE	SEPTEMBER '08	TBA	FLAMENCO RED	£11,490.00
● OCTAVIA ELEGANCE 5DR HATCH	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	GK58NNH	SEPTEMBER '08	TBA	SATIN GREY	£11,790.00
● OCTAVIA ELEGANCE 5DR HATCH	2.0 TDi DSG (DIESEL)	GL58EKH	JANUARY '09	TBA	FLAMENCO RED	£14,990.00
● OCTAVIA AMBIENTE 5DR ESTATE	2.0 TDi DSG (DIESEL)	GJ08VAV	MARCH '08	TBA	STORM BLUE	£11,990.00
● OCTAVIA SE 5DR ESTATE	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	GK09YFT	MARCH '09	TBA	CAPPUCCINO BEIGE	£13,390.00
OCTAVIA ELEGANCE 5DR ESTATE	2.0 TDi 140 BHP (DIESEL)	GF56DYG	NOVEMBER '06		FLAMENCO RED	£9,990.00

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Model shown is Octavia vRS hatch 2.0T FSI 200bhp at £19,015 RRP including optional metallic paint at £400 RRP. **Official fuel consumption in mpg for the Škoda range: Urban 19.2 (14.7) – 53.3 (5.3), Extra Urban 38.2 (7.4) – 83.1 (3.4), Combined 28.0 (10.1) – 68.9 (4.1). CO_2 Emissions (g/km) Škoda Range: 109 – 235**

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Model shown is a Fabia 3 1.4 16V 85bhp at £12,730 including optional metallic paint at £400 RRP. **Official fuel consumption in mpg (litres/100km) for the Fabia Range: Urban 27.7 (10.2) – 53.3 (5.3), Extra-urban 47.1 (6.0) – 83.1 (3.4), Combined 37.7 (7.5) – 68.9 (4.1). CO_2 emissions for the Fabia Range 109 – 180g/km.**

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UK car market boosted by

VAUXHALL INSIGNIA

VAUXHALL'S Insignia Sports Tourer (estate) format was the 2009 European Car of the Year and signalled a change of direction by the General Motors brand.

By dumping the old Vectra name and boosting the quality and design content of its replacement, Vauxhall put pressure on the rival Ford Mondeo and even some executive marques.

It has since become the best-selling 'family model' in the mainstream and Vauxhall aims for more of the same with the newly-launched sixth generation Astra – another good-looking car that is also roomy and highly competent.

TOYOTA IQ

THIS city car outsmarts the Smart two-seater. Though just a hand span longer, it can seat four – well, three adults and one child in reality – and feels solidly built and good to drive.

At the moment, a premium price deters would-be buyers, but they should simply go for a test drive – it could be all the car they need.

FIAT 500

THE cult car of the moment. Inspired by a 1950s vintage 'Cinquecento' the 500 has caught the eye and put huge pressure on BMW's own retro star, the Mini.

The 500 is also cheap to run and nippy around town.

Expect to see even more on the road next year after the giant BSM driving school decided to make the 500 its main learner car – great news for Fiat as learner drivers tend to go shopping for the car they passed in.

NEW car sales were stalled at the start of the year, but there are signs that the market is on the move again.

by **STEVE LOADER**

Economic commentators are still reluctant to claim the UK is emerging from recession and new car registrations for the year to the end of November were nearly nine per cent down on 2008.

But there has been a definite upturn recently, with November registrations nearly 60 per cent better than for the same month in 2008.

Admittedly, this turnaround was largely due to the Government's Scrappage grant scheme launched in May and expected to continue until next March. This offers a £2,000 donation towards a new car for anyone sending their old car to the scrapper.

The idea was to stimulate the embattled industry and support the Government's aim to take older 'gas guzzlers' off the road.

Unfortunately, while dealers have benefited from extra forecourt traffic, the real winners are foreign-based manufacturers of the smaller cars favoured by buyers under the Scrappage scheme – UK-built cars tend to be bigger models.

The older cars being crushed are also usually well-maintained one-two owners-from-new examples that would normally have fed through to more hard-up buyers, these being forced to soldier on with real bangers emitting even higher emissions than the cars being scrapped.

However, there is also no doubt that the market is benefiting from the buzz of new technology and new designs, with performance losing out as image, downsizing, eco-friendliness and outright economy become the key selling points.

We've assembled a few of the key models that have made 2009 a big year for a fast-changing – if not big-selling – UK motor market.

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Scrappage and fresh blood

JAGUAR XF

THIS shows that performance is not dead as a selling point, though the mid-range Jag's style and obvious class obviously help.

The German trio – BMW, Audi and Mercedes-Benz – must be worried about this car, especially as it is available with two silky and sporty 3.0-litre diesels, though the XFR V8 petrol performance model is the car pictured here.

HYUNDAI i10

SCRAPPAGE star of the year, but this capable little five-door city car does not need a £2,000 discount to appeal; it's good to drive, practical and comes with Hyundai's five-year warranty.

TOYOTA PRIUS

TOYOTA has invested huge amounts in three generations of its pioneering petrol-electric star – probably the world's best-known green car.

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VW GOLF

VOLKSWAGEN'S incredible BlueMotion model has such low CO2 emissions that it falls below the 100g/km threshold for paying road tax.

The new Golf range impressed generally when launched at the start of 2009, thanks to a terrific drivers' car chassis carried over from the previous car and a boost in quality and refinement over its already-competent predecessor.

FORD FIESTA

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2002 52 SAAB 9-5 2.3HOT Aero , 4 Doors, Manual, Saloon, Petrol, 69,000 miles, Steel Grey. ABS, Alloy wheels, Full Electric Pack, Cruise control, Park distance control, Sports seats, Traction control, Climate control, In Car Entertainment, Warranty, Leather upholstery, Metallic paintwork, Tinted glass. £5,495

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Bluewater surge as confidence returns

SALES last month at Kent's giant Bluewater shopping centre outperformed a recession-hit UK for the second consecutive month, ***writes Andy Rogers***.

Stores reported a five per cent increase in sales against November, 2008, although it was a month of two halves. The latter fortnight showed a Christmas shopping surge and record-breaking flourish over the final four days.

All categories did well, but the leaders were jewellery (up 15 per cent), travel – where a staggering 102 per cent rise was fuelled by a new Kuoni shop – and 'big ticket' electrical goods such as TVs and audio systems, which rose 15 per cent in the light of the January return to 17.5 per cent VAT.

General manager Andrew Parkinson said: "The second consecutive month of growth at Bluewater suggests consumer confidence is returning.

"While guests are spending more, they are spending smartly, avoiding the VAT increase by buying more expensive items now, for example. They are also utilising retailer offers, such as the three-for-two type promotions."

FOOTFALL: Bluewater is breaking records

The positive news from Bluewater follows John Lewis confirming that the branch there is the number one performer in its UK chain for the trading half-year to date.

David Barford, director of selling operations, said: "We are delighted with the performance of our Bluewater branch, which keeps breaking sales records. Last week, for example, was Bluewater's best ever, with a 22.5 per cent increase in sales compared with the same week last year. Driving Bluewater's success is the £22 million refurbishment and the creation of the John Lewis food hall from Waitrose, which has exceeded expectations and attracted new customers."

Bluewater's role as a day-out destination was underlined by a five per cent increase in restaurant sales and 84 per cent growth in sales at the site's Winter Wonderland compared with November, 2008.

Mr Parkinson said Christmas always brings visitors from further away who make the most of food outlets and the Winter Wonderland.

He added: "We are also seeing new behaviour this year. Catering sales in the morning, for example, are up as people arrive for breakfast before the stores open at 9am. Evening catering has also increased."

He predicted a changed pattern in the final run-up to Christmas, with a surge in fashion sales as shops begin discount sales, and more impulse buying, helped by 29 recent store openings and 39 refurbishments.

Downing Street sends for Oil Drum

HYDROGEN technology developed by Canterbury-based Oil Drum led to the chief executive meeting Prime Minister Gordon Brown.

The PM invited Darryl Watts to the UK low-carbon innovation and partnership networking at 10 Downing Street following Oil Drum's success in licensing its Save-Fuel On Demand Hydrogen Generator globally.

"Walking through the big black door at Number 10 was very exciting, if a little intimidating," said Mr Watts.

"The Government has recognised the potential of green low-carbon technologies, not only in terms of creating jobs and businesses, but also helping to tackle the big issue we all face – climate change. We have worked hard to open up international markets and are close to agreeing licences for our technology in many countries which are heavy users of diesel engines."

The patented Save-Fuel system is a compact hydrogen-generating unit that can be retro-fitted to a truck or bus and powered by the vehicle's own power source. The hydrogen is introduced before the combustion process, boosting efficiency to cut fuel consumption by more than 10 per cent and CO_2 and hydrocarbon emissions to zero.

Oil Drum's latest international licence was signed with Belgian company Automotive Ecology.

DARRYL WATTS

Faster trains will speed investment

FULL high-speed train services from Kent into London launched this week, prompting upbeat forecasts from Locate in Kent.

The investment promotion agency's chief executive, Paul Wookey, said: "We expect interest in the county to grow with the full launch of services.

"And with 47 per cent of respondents to one of our surveys believing it will encourage further investment in Kent, the county's businesses think so, too."

Locate in Kent is also running a 'Kent. Closer than you think' campaign jointly with Ashford's Future, Kent County Council, Kent Thameside Regeneration Partnership, Medway Council and train operator Southeastern, to alert businesses to the service and Kent's office and operational cost benefit – up to 60 per cent lower than London's.

Tony Parson, director of London property developer Trenport Investments, said: "This is a most impressive service that puts Kent firmly on the map."

'Extraordinary'

Mike Scott, partner at Tunbridge Wells law firm Cripps Harries Hall LLP, said: "It was extraordinary to leave St Pancras one minute and find yourself beyond the M25 before you'd had a chance to look out the window."

East Kent will also benefit from much shorter journey times to London. Ramsgate and Margate are now 80 and 91 minutes away.

Jo Shockley, of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, said: "This service makes it possible for people working in central London to live in the rural idyll of east Kent and enjoy a high quality of life there.

"Instead of a long commute, the office will be just minutes away. We hope this opens up a prosperous and successful future for Kent and makes a real difference to its relationship with London."

• Folkestone-based collectables company, Buckingham Covers, has marked the new service with an official souvenir.

It was chosen by Southeastern to create a limited edition cover (collectable envelope).

Just 250 were created with Southeastern's logo, an exclusive stamp issued for the occasion and postmarked at St Pancras on the day the new trains began full operations.

Most covers were pre-booked by collectors, but a small number are available to buy at £12.95.

Charities bank on innovative operation

By **ANDY ROGERS**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

KENT-based Charity Bank just can't stop winning awards.

It was the only victor at KOS Media's inaugural £1 Million Business Challenge Awards to walk away with two category wins – for Employer and for Innovation.

Judges praised the bank then for its groundbreaking business model at a time when financial institutions faced immense criticism, while its record as an employer was clear from "the strength and passion of its staff's comments".

It has since had its innovation recognised again by two awards from the Institute of Financial Services (IFS): for Most Effective Partnership Strategy and Most Innovative Customer Experience Programme.

The bank, which has its head office in Tonbridge High Street, is a unique operation using depositors' money to provide affordable loan finance and advice solely to charities, voluntary organisations, community and social enterprises across the UK.

It particularly impressed judges with its 'Different Journeys' initiative, where it takes its depositors to meet local borrowers in their area.

The IFS judges were also impressed with the bank's partnership with Yorkshire Forward; the regional development agency helped Charity Bank set up an office in Leeds to support organisations in the Yorkshire/Humber region.

Charity Bank chief executive Malcolm Hayday said: "We are honoured to have this recognition of our work.

"It's testimony to the passion and commitment of the team, who want to make a difference, by making creative use of people's savings, in order to help charities deliver the best service they can to communities across the UK."

Charity Bank was established in 2002 and is the only regulated bank that is also a registered general charity. It has grown year on year – its balance sheet is now about £60m – and has invested in community activities including the arts, sustainable development and recycling, drug and alcohol rehabilitation and faith projects.

It gained tangible support from its KOS Media Business Challenge wins. The two trophies also came with nearly £200,000 of advertising and marketing spend with the print and web media group, publisher of the Kent and Tunbridge Wells on Saturday Sunday papers, the Yourlocals midweek series and the www.kentnews.co.uk website.Mr Hayday said at the awards night: "Even for a bank like us it is very difficult to get the column inches against the big commercial banks that spend millions on advertising.

"We haven't got those resources, so to win this is a tremendous fillip for us and for the whole of team."

On adding the KOS Media Employer award, he said: "This one is for the staff. It is they who won it. Without the staff Charity Bank is nothing, frankly."

WELL DONE: Malcolm Hayday is congratulated by Andrea Stannard of Cardy Construction during the awards night

To view, search 'Charity Bank' @ yourkenttv.co.uk

Julie Maddocks reports on the work of Business Challenge award winner Charity Bank

Hands On stays clean and green

HANDS On – a Kent-based hand car wash firm that is now the largest of its type in Europe – has taken an award-winning 'clean and green' stance.

From its headquarters in Ebbsfleet it runs car wash, trolley collection, car park marshalling and other services for 200 shopping centres and supermarkets up and down the UK, but has sought to raise its environmental profile.

POLISHED: Hands On

It started by launching a new approach to car washing, using specially designed micro-fibre cleaning materials to retain water and draw dirt into their fibres.

Hands On claims it provides the same clean finish yet cuts water consumption by more than 60 per cent.

The move has already earned three awards: a Green Apple for Environmental Best Practice, Green Mark Level One accreditation – a recognised green credential and platform for ISO 14001 status – and the Green Hero Award, which helps organisations save money by reducing costs through energy saving techniques and green policies.

The company will also feature in the next Green Book, the environmental 'bible', and has signed up to the new Green Achiever scheme developed by E4environment, encouraging companies to undertake a gradually escalating route to best green practice.

Commercial director Robert Dine said of Green Achiever: "It allows us to show businesses and potential customers that we are doing our bit to help the environment.

"Green Achiever is a very positive step with realistic, sustainable targets set by us that customers and suppliers can understand."

Mandy Stoker, director at E4environment, said: "People are becoming increasingly vocal about what they expect from retailers and manufacturers, for example, less packaging and more recyclable products and packaging, as well as services and products that are environmentally friendly."

Think global, but buy local

THIS week's UN climate change summit showed how difficult it is to achieve unity on global warming, ***writes Pat Crawford***.

Adding to the pressure is the forecast there will be three billion more people to feed by 2050. Global warming and population pose a huge challenge, yet any country taking unilateral action would be disadvantaged.

So it is heartening that more people are considering their lifestyle and taking action.

Five years ago, the term 'local food' was rarely heard but, conscious of the urgency to cut 'food miles' to reduce carbon emissions, more of us opt to buy British.

The UK has the ability to become far more self-supporting in food production, but we have a chicken-and-egg-situation (no pun intended) to overcome first. Not long ago, our farmers and growers went through a tough time. Things are looking up, but we need to go on increasing confidence in the sector by buying seasonally available British food.

And consumers have the power to ensure it happens. A lot of moaning goes on about the power of the supermarkets, but rather than creating demand, they react to it. If consumers demand British-produced food, supermarkets will be stocked accordingly.

But we cannot increase food production unless we have a highly trained and skilled workforce and the farming industry is already recording skill shortages in certain sectors. This relates to farming becoming 'unfashionable' during the bad years, but it is making a comeback and encouraging more new entrants, looking for careers that combine opportunities with a unique lifestyle.

GROWING demand from clients for locally produced food and drink has prompted a Kent conference venue to sign a deal with the county's leading English wine producer, *adds Andy Rogers*.

Pines Calyx, at St Margaret's, near Dover, has asked Tenterden-based Chapel Down Winery to supply its award-winning wines for conferences, weddings and events.

Louise Kjaertinge of Pines Calyx said: "There's been an increase in delegates and event-bookers asking for Kent-produced food and drink. Chapel Down was the obvious choice and the wines have been a huge success. We also wanted to extend our beer offering and the winery produces three bottled beers."

Pines Calyx plans to add more Kent suppliers in 2010. Ms Kjaertinge said: "We already have local preferred suppliers, including Black Pig butchers, Kingsdown Water and Core Juice."

She also revealed plans for a community farm and making land available for food production in the Pines Garden.

The cake's progress

FATE took a hand when luxury cake maker Wendy Douglas Sinclair donated a festive creation for the Christmas raffle at her daughter's school in Aldington, near Ashford.

The winner kindly donated it to another draw at a local church – and Wendy couldn't believe it when she won the cake back.

"My children, Lottie and Fergus were a bit miffed to see the cake leave the house in the first place, but were thrilled when fate took a hand and returned it, just in time for Christmas," said Wendy.

The cake – known as 'Chocolate Fireplace' because the central feature is solid chocolate – is one of an offbeat series by Wendy who recently set up Absolutely Caking-It in response to what she saw as a niche for bespoke premium cakes for special occasions and events.

"I've had a passion for baking since I was knee high," said Wendy. "But I've become more interested in the creative opportunities from decorating, using lots of different edible things – the Christmas tree on this one is an ice-cream cone.

"I try to ensure there is something for everyone in my cakes and part of the fun is discussing with customers exactly what they want to see and enjoy from cakes they order."

Absolutely Caking-It is listed on Facebook and will soon to have its own website. Wendy said the start-up idea came from baking spectacular cakes for friends and relatives, including a recent landmark birthday for actor husband Andrew, whose credits include 11 years with the Holby City TV series.

WAIT FOR IT: Wendy Douglas Sinclair with Chocolate Fireplace

Three cheers for growth

NEW jobs figures paint the strongest overall growth figures for more than two years, ***writes Andy Rogers.***

The Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC) and KPMG Report on Jobs uses recruitment consultancy data for what is claimed to be the most comprehensive guide to the UK labour market – and the result for November showed three promising trends:

- Growth of permanent staff appointments was the strongest since July, 2007.
- Temp billings rose at the sharpest rate for 19 months.
- Permanent salaries increased for the first time in 15 months.

Nursing/medical/care was the most in-demand category of permanent staff, while engineering/construction employees were the most sought-after temps.

The rise in staff salaries was modest though, and countered by a further fall in hourly rates of pay for temporary/contract employees.

REC chief executive Kevin Green said: "This is very positive news. November's figures show the fastest rise in permanent jobs for 28 months. Employers in nearly all sectors are lifting recruitment freezes and starting to hire again. Flexibility in the UK's labour market has proved effective in ensuring unemployment has not reached the levels experienced by some of our international competitors.

"While UK output has shrunk by 5.9 per cent, employment has declined by only two per cent.

"Despite the positive signs, the Government needs to do more – particularly to help the one million 18 to 24-year-olds out of work."

KPMG partner Bernard Brown said: "Looking at the latest data one might get the impression the recession is over.

"Confidence has definitely returned to the private sector and the UK jobs market looks healthier than at any time in the last two-and-a-half years.

"However, we are still to see the impact of the Government's anticipated public sector cuts on the jobs market, which will play out over the next 12 to 18 months."

Stick to the limit with staff Christmas party

EMPLOYERS haved been warned about 'one too many' at Christmas staff parties – not that extra tipple, but a penny too many on this festive staff perk.

The consequence of exceeding the £150 per head tax-free limit on food and drink, accommodation and any transport – if paid by the company – is that staff and employer alike become liable for the full amount on their tax and National Insurance bills. The party-pooping news comes from the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales, though it does point out that the office 'do' could be a timely morale booster if firms don't go over the limit.

"Businesses should make the most of the tax-free amount and not just resort to putting up cheap tinsel in the office and offering plates of pretzels and soft drinks," said ICAEW official Anita Monteith.

"It has been a tough time for many businesses and staff are probably in need of having their spirits raised.

"A Christmas party is a real morale boost and rewards the work staff put in over the year.

"It's a good way for businesses to show appreciation for their employees' contributions and encourages their commitment and ongoing efforts."

POOR weather and the recession has failed to trim the ambition of Maidstone lawn treatment business GreenThumb.

Jim Gray and David Hayter launched it 10 years ago and report that business is booming as cash-strapped homeowners in the county invest in their lawns rather than move home or take expensive holidays.

GreenThumb employs 10 people and has defied the slump by growing more than 20 per cent this year, with more expected in 2010 judging by inquiries.

Jim said: "In most cases our treatments cost less than people will spend on products in DIY stores, so we've picked up a good deal of business in the slump."

The company tends more than 5,600 lawns throughout Maidstone and Medway and is also working flat out to repair lawns scorched by the summer drought.

GreenThumb in Maidstone is part of a 200-strong nationwide franchise and won the network's Business Development of the Year award for 2009. GreenThumb marketing manager David Collison said: "It's a tremendous achievement and shows how a good business model can thrive even in tough economic times."

VAT-registered businesses in Kent are being urged to get ready now for major changes to return filing and payment arriving on April 1, 2010.

Those with an annual turnover of £100,000 or more (excluding VAT) will have to file their VAT returns online and pay VAT electronically, as will any business registering on or after April 1, 2010, whatever their turnover.

COUTTS & Co's Tunbridge Wells team raised more than £5,000 for the Prince's Trust by hosting a Christmas reception and charity auction for more than 100 local clients and contacts.

The event at Coutts' office at Wellington Gate, Church Road, was both a thank you to clients and a fund-raiser for the trust's work providing training and development opportunities for unemployed and disadvantaged young people.

Many clients and local businesses donated auction lots such as an Aston Martin driving experience, a Champneys Spa Party for 12, a private fragrance consultation with world renowned perfumer Roja Dove and lunches.

Coutts' spokesman John Goss said: "Events such as these are very important to us. Not only do they give our clients and ourselves an opportunity to contribute towards the initiatives of good causes in the festive season, but it also provides an excellent opportunity for our clients to network with each other, providing further opportunity to build on their business links locally."

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Fleeting financial woes?

STAYING ALIVE: Ebbsfleet United's recent difficulties have been well documented

In December 1959 Gravesend & Northfleet were struggling to stay in the Southern League. Precisely 25 years later, history repeated itself. FRED ATKINS asks if football clubs are returning to the days of boom-and-bust economics, or if they have always lived on the brink.

DON'T be too surprised if a story of a financial crisis besetting Ebbsfleet United breaks this week.

The Conference side's recent financial travails have been well documented and while there's nothing to suggest the club are in imminent peril, the historical omens are not good.

Precisely 100 years ago, Ebbsfleet's ancestors, Northfleet United and Gravesend United, were both invited to join the Southern League, along with Dartford.

All three had flirted with the regional competition in previous seasons, but as one correspondent noted: "Financially the clubs were practically crippled, so much so that in the case of Northfleet, Gravesend, Dartford and Chatham, it has taken years to recover lost ground. It is a coincidence that just at a period when there's a revival of football in Kent the same old temptation comes along. But will Kent clubs fall into it?"

Temptation

On this occasion all three clubs decided the risks of joining the regional league were too great and spurned the offer.

Yet the temptation never went away.

Exactly 50 years later, in December 1959, a dire warning was sounded by the supporters' club of the now-merged Gravesend & Northfleet FC, who were by then struggling to stay afloat in the Southern League: "If money is not forthcoming, football at Northfleet will come to an end."

Wages were up and attendances down. The Fleet took the almost unheard-of step, then, of releasing two players, Hawkings and Baron, purely because they were earning £36 and £40 per week respectively and the wage bill had to be trimmed.

The supporters' club complained it had given the club a staggering £100,000, only a tenth of which had gone on maintaining Stonebridge Road.

"Where has the rest gone? The simple answer is in players' wages," the supporters' club claimed.

The Fleet were far from alone. Ashford staged a floodlit friendly with Charlton at Essella Park 50 years ago this week and attracted a crowd of 1,465, described as meagre (but 10 times higher than the average gate at Homelands this season).

Tunbridge Wells United had been promoted from the Kent League at the end of the 1958/59 season, but they too were finding life in the Southern League tough, complaining that "only" 490 fans watched a 2-2 draw with Cambridge United, again 50 years ago this week, saying that they needed at least 1,000 through the turnstiles to survive.

Fast-forward precisely 25 years to December 1984 and the board at Gravesend were warning the club "could go to the wall in six weeks".

Acting chairman Dave Hockley accused Gravesham Council of restricting their fund-raising activities and contributing to a debt of £33,000.

This was contested by the council, but Hockley said Fleet were on the verge of withdrawing from the Southern League Premier Division, saying "This is no idle threat".

The chronology is coincidental, but it does illustrate how a club's finances are cyclical as they live beyond their means to sustain promotion challenges and repent at leisure.

Yet if a club do stay on an even financial keel, they risk stagnation. Tunbridge Wells have spent the past 42 seasons in the Kent League, winning it once – coincidentally 25 years ago. Since then they have poodled along, never finishing higher than fifth.

The alternative is, to borrow Gordon Brown's phrase, a return to boom and bust, though it remains rare for a club to actually fold. Dartford and Dover have been on the brink in the past decade and are now resurgent. The Fleet recovered, thrived and are now in trouble again, though they are arguably less at risk than Margate, Maidstone, Folkestone, Sittingbourne and Ashford – all of whom are struggling to stay afloat in regional leagues.

There is no set text on how to survive and prosper at non-league level.

Skinner and Gray set their sights on more GB glory

KENT athletes Mike Skinner and Natalie Gray finished the season on a high by winning medals at the European Cross Country Championships.

The pair represented Great Britain at the championships in Dublin last week, with Skinner helping the senior men to a silver medal, while Medway & Maidstone athlete Gray, who finished 18th, was part of a gold medal-winning women's under-23 squad.

Picture: IGOR KUPCO

GOLD: Natalie Gray

Skinner, 30, finished a career-best 13th at the event in Dublin and is hoping to use that experience when he runs in the European Athletic Championships, Commonwealth Games and World Cross Country Championships next year.

He said: "Obviously we went into the race hoping we could pick up the gold, but looking back on it we are happy with silver. Now I've just got to continue this form and stay in the mind of selectors for the World Championships."

It's time to give referees a break

WHEN Thierry Henry handled the ball to set up France's winning goal and deny Ireland a place in next year's World Cup, all eyes turned to one man – Martin Hansson, ***writes Steve Tervet***.

The Swedish referee, who failed to spot Henry's misdemeanour, was subsequently held responsible for the result, despite all that had gone before that moment in the European qualifying campaign.

However, when such a slip is made by officials in other sports, there isn't so much of a blame culture as teams either acknowledge their own faults or accept human error is always going to play a part.

Phil Knight, national list football referee and Canterbury City chairman, said: "When I go out to referee, there's a determination to get every decision right, but it's inhuman to expect us to do that. Managers and players all make mistakes, but referees are expected not to. There should be more sensitivity towards officials.

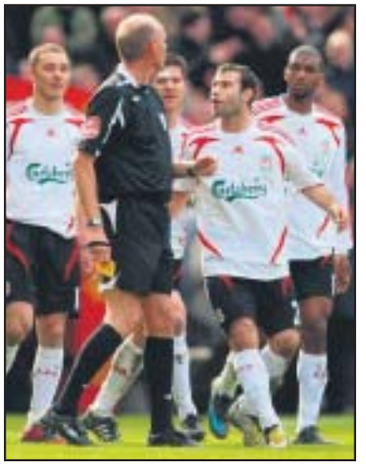
"One of the saddest things about football is the way managers come out and criticise referees. Too often, it's easy for the likes of Sir Alex Ferguson and Arsene Wenger to deflect the attention away from themselves, whether it be goals they've conceded or something bad within the club."

Football is widely accepted to be the fastest-moving sport and with just one man in the middle making the lion's share of decisions, officials from other sports are at a loss as to why the beautiful game persists with the culture of solo responsibility.

Eric Watts, who umpires in the Kent/Sussex hockey league, said: "One referee covering the pitch isn't enough. It's so hard for referees to spot everything and it's always been the natural way in rugby and hockey for officials to confer."

Kevin Gosden, a rugby referee in the East Kent Invicta League, believes the bond of respect between players and officials is something which can't be forged purely between the first and last whistles.

He said: "In rugby there are more ex-players taking up refereeing. We've been players, we know what it's like from their point of view. In that respect, we've got the advantage in rugby."



TOUGH: Liverpool's Javier Mascherano questions Kent referee Steve Bennett

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Aitken and Masters at Q-School

KENT golfers Dani Masters (pictured left) and Claire Aitken (right) will be fighting to stay in contention as the Ladies European Tour (LET) Qualifying School heats up in Spain today.

More than 150 golfers arrived at La Manga earlier this week to battle for the precious cards to the 2010 LET season. Both Aitken and Masters made it through to the final stage, which began with the first of four rounds on Friday. The penultimate round is played today, with a cut made this evening to eliminate anyone outside the top 50.

Aitken is hoping to emulate her efforts in last year's event, where she won a place on the Tour for the first time. A disappointing debut forced her to return, although the Gravesend golfer was high enough in the rankings to go straight through to the final stage.

Masters, who lost her card last year due to injury problems, had to come through pre-qualifying this week.

The 26-year-old from Maidstone began badly with a five-over-par 76 in Tuesday's first round, but two 72s saw her safely through to join Aitken and the other hopefuls who teed off on Friday.

The top 30 players at the end of tomorrow will receive cards for next season.

Pictures: ADY KERRY

Bidding war looms for Simeon

Gills striker linked with £1.5m move

INTEREST: Speculation is expected to intensify when the transfer window reopens next month

Picture: ADY KERRY

By DAVID PRITCHARD

POTENTIAL interest in Gillingham striker Simeon Jackson will be left until the last minute to stop a bidding war, says manager Mark Stimson.

A host of clubs in the Premier League and Championship have been linked with a £1.5 million move for the 22-year-old, who had scored 13 goals this season before yesterday's game with Stockport.

Gillingham have always stressed they have never received a formal enquiry for the Canada international, despite the reported interest. Stimson, who signed Jackson for £150,000 from Rushden & Diamonds less than two years ago, admitted everyone assumed a deal would be done but is not surprised that clubs have declined to show their hand so far.

"You keep it quiet and when the time's right you just put the bid in and go for it rather than putting it in early," Stimson said. "That can lead to more speculation, people then talk and you might lose out.

"We've always said every player has got a price. But there's so much speculation around him, everyone's assuming and expecting him to go. We've had nothing solid whatsoever, but maybe teams aren't bothering to ring up, they're just going to put something down on the table."

Prized assets

While the end of the transfer window will not come quick enough for Stimson in relation to keeping his most prized asset, he is hoping to bring in players.

The Gills boss will meet chairman Paul Scally next week to discuss the resources available to recruit reinforcements. The money available could be boosted by the departure of Adam Miller, who is expected to make his loan move to Dagenham & Redbridge permanent in the New Year.

As in the summer, top of Stimson's list will be a goalscorer, even if he is able to retain Jackson. Fruitless efforts in the last window saw the club narrowly miss out on several targets, including Charlton's Chris Dickson and Paul Benson at Dagenham.

The Gills boss has returned to his short list in recent weeks and will step up his enquiries over the festive period, with loan moves more likely than permanent deals.

He said: "The list is still there, we'll attack them over the next week or so and see who's going to be available and who's not. There are players I'm looking at and talking to other managers about and just waiting for January 1, so we might be able to do something."

In defence it is hoped Matt Fry will prolong his loan move from West Ham, which would help in Simon King's extended absence with an ankle injury. Danny Jackman is on course to return from a shoulder injury next month, which would increase the squad's options in midfield.

Picture: HELEN COOPER ACER PHOTOART

SUCCESS: Courtney Tulloch returned to Pegasus Gymnastics Club from the World Gymnasiada with a bronze medal

Young gymnast scoops a bronze at world event

COURTNEY Tulloch scooped his highest honour yet as he picked up the team bronze medal for England at the World Gymnasiada in Doha, Qatar.

The Pegasus gymnast also finished agonisingly short of an individual bronze on his best piece, rings, and was sixth on the pommel after scoring 13.30 in qualification.

Tulloch, a gold medallist at the British Championships in October, was competing on the world stage for the first time and he performed competently on all pieces in the Aspire Centre of Excellence.

The competition, also known as the World School Games, involved 102 boys from 30 countries, with Tulloch one of the five-man England team, coached by Sergey Sizhanov.

Tulloch's confidence, having reached the pommel final, was evident as he top-scored for the team on rings with combination strength moves, swing to strength links, clean execution and held positions.

In the final, Ukraine's Yevgen Yudenkov was to end Tulloch's hopes of an individual medal, but England were not to return empty-handed.

The Bearsted-based 14-year-old joined team-mates Frank Baines, Cameron MacKenzie, Thomas Gibbs and Anthony Wise on the podium to collect his bronze, with Ukraine and Spain claiming the gold and silver respectively.

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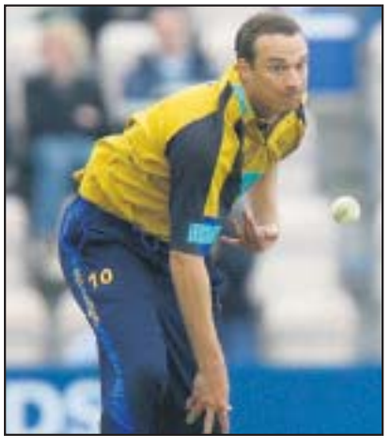


INJURY: Aussie fast bowler Stuart Clark

County offer Clark short overseas deal

AUSTRALIAN fast bowler Stuart Clark is waiting to learn the extent of a back injury before signing a short-term contract as Kent's overseas player, ***writes Glenn Pearson***.

The seam bowler, who was all set to feature as the county's overseas player last summer before being recalled by the Australians for their series in South Africa and later the Ashes, hopes to be available at the start of the season and his deal will run for up to three months.

Kent's offer, exclusively revealed by our website www.kentnews.co.uk, is to remain flexible in the event of Clark being called up again by Australia.

However, Kent head coach Paul Farbrace did explain the quick bowler could remain as one of two overseas players allowed for next season's Friends Provident Twenty20 Cup.

He told Kent on Sunday: "We have offered Stuart a contract and at this stage it will be for the first three months of the season. The reason he is an attractive signing for us is because he is not playing in the Indian Premier League and will be available for the first half of the summer.

"He offers a lot both on and off the field and is an exceptional bowler."

The 34-year-old is out with a back problem and will hold off signing a deal at Kent until he is injury-free, although Farbrace expects that to be in the next couple of weeks.

"If there was an injury doubt, then both parties would have to take a look at that," he said.

"He is happy with the contract, but since he received it he got an injury and because he is a decent bloke he is waiting to see how that works out before signing it.

"He will sign for the first part of the season and that leaves us with the option to get a spinner for the later stages of the summer."

Tredwell answers England's Test call

JAMES Tredwell has been called up to the England squad for the Test series against South Africa.

The 27-year-old was previously called to South Africa last month as back-up to first-choice spinner Graeme Swann for the One-Day International series and has remained in the country while with the England Performance Programme.

Picture: IGOR KUPCO

CALL-UP: Tredwell

The uncapped Kent spinner has now been included as both back-up and competition for Swann, who has been suffering with a side-strain of late. The Nottinghamshire spinner was able to play in the first Test, which ends today, but Tredwell will be competing for the spinner's berth for the remaining three Tests.

Head coach Andy Flower said: "Graeme's injury is improving and we expect him to be available. But with a further three matches to come after Centurion we have decided that we need a 'like for like' replacement on hand for Graeme should this be required later in the tour."

Winter now spells hard work for Kent

Where are they now? **GLENN PEARSON** takes a look at where Kent's cricketers are spending the winter and what they are doing to prepare for their return to Division One of the County Championship

Pictures: ADY KERRY

PREPARATION: Head coach Paul Farbrace wants Kent to be ready

THE days of cricketers spending the winter months doing a 'real job' or putting their feet up after a long, hard summer are long gone.

Now professional cricketers are expected to spend the off season either working hard in the gym, facing endless balls from a bowling machine at an indoor centre, or, better still, playing some cricket abroad.

Several Kent players are doing just that this summer, while the rest can be found at the Ames-Levett indoor centre at the club's St Lawrence Ground in Canterbury, preparing for the dreaded bleep test on Friday, March 19.

Skipper Rob Key and head coach Paul Farbrace sat down with each member of the squad at the end of last season to talk about their performance but, more importantly, told them what's to be expected of them during the winter.

Farbrace said: "We sat down and told each player their role in the team so they are all clear and know what is expected of them for next season.

"They spent a month after the end of last season looking at any issues they had with their game, then November and December working on fitness and any technical flaws they want to work on. January, February and March is about playing the game and getting ready for the start of the season. It's an important time of the year."

Here's what the Kent squad have scheduled for this winter:

ROB KEY: Batting three times a week with coach Simon Willis at the indoor centre in Canterbury as well as regular gym work. There's a possibility of a short stint in Perth, Australia, in the New Year.

JOE DENLY: Has been in South Africa with the England one-day squad and Performance Programme. Was due back on Thursday. Is likely to be included in the England Lions' tour in the New Year.

GERAINT JONES: The wicket-keeper has had a complete break, apart from fitness work. He is in Brisbane, Australia, and returns in January to work on his batting after a successful pre-season last winter.

MARTIN VAN JAARSVELD: The club's vice-captain stayed in the county after the season ended and has been working for the last six or seven weeks on batting. Is heading back to South Africa over Christmas and hopes to play for Nashua Titans in the New Year.

SAM NORTHEAST: Has been playing rackets in national competitions, including at Queens. Was with the England Performance Programme camp before going to India for a 10-day camp working against spin-bowling. Going to Pretoria in January for an ECB performance camp, then in February and March he will be in Durban, South Africa, working under former Kent coach Graham Ford.

DARREN STEVENS: The all-rounder has been working on his game in Canterbury for the last two months and has now left for Cape Town for the winter to play club cricket. He's hoping to play Twenty20 and one-day games for Cape Cobras.

JAMES HOCKLEY: Has been working on his fitness in Cranbrook and is expected to start batting in the nets at Canterbury two or three times a week in the New Year.

AMJAD KHAN: The fast bowler has been with the performance squad for the last month in Loughborough and South Africa. Spent the first part of the winter in Denmark, hoping in the New Year to be involved with England. If not, he will be back in Canterbury working with county coaches Paul Farbrace and Simon Willis.

ROBBIE JOSEPH: Had a successful shoulder operation and has been back batting and bowling since. He is starting to build up his work and at the moment everything looks good. The quick bowler hopes to go out to Durban to do some bowling in warmer weather to ease himself back in for the start of the season.

JAMES TREDWELL: Is in the England Test squad and before that was with the one-day side and the Performance Programme squad. There's a chance he will be included in the England Lions' tour in the New Year.

SIMON COOK: The veteran seamer has been working on his game at the indoor centre and coaching some younger bowlers. Will be heading off to Hong Kong in the New Year to work on his overall game.

ROB FERLEY: Has been working in isolation in Sevenoaks. Wants to make changes to his game and has been bowling up to two hours every day. Paul Farbrace and Min Patel have been working with him.

AZHAR MAHMOOD: Former Pakistan all-rounder has been out in Abu Dhabi and is now heading to Pakistan to play some domestic cricket. He is working hard on his fitness for the start of the season.

PHIL EDWARDS: His main priority has been working on fitness levels. He is hoping to go away in the New Year but has been working with bowling coach Geoff Arnold. It's going to be a big season for him.

PAUL DIXEY: The wicket-keeper is in his first full year as a professional and has been working hard on fitness. He has also been working on batting and is heading to Durban with Sam Northeast.

ALEX BLAKE: Is at university in Leeds and Bradford UCCE. Going to work over Christmas on his batting and then heads to Pretoria to work with the performance squad.

Pictures: IGOR KUPCO

Hess in frantic search for players

Picture: SIMON HARRIS

SUSPENDED: Matt Fish will miss today's Dover home game

Dover Athletic v St Albans City

KICK-OFF 3PM AT CRABBLE

DOVER Athletic boss Andy Hessenthaler has been forced to scout the loan market in a bid to bring in reinforcements for his injury-hit side ahead of the visit of St Albans.

The Whites, who sit second in Blue Square South, have been hit by a number of problems in defence and could have just one fully fit defender for today's game.

Dean Hill, Jake Leberl, Sam Gore and Craig Cloke are all doubts for the game, while Matt Fish is suspended. Left back Tom Wynter has also been recalled from loan by Gillingham.

The lack of defenders has seen Hessenthaler dip into the loan market and the Dover boss also hinted he may have to move Nicky Southall into defence.

He said: "We could be down to just one centre-half fit and available for the game which is a blow. Jake Leberl and Dean Hill are rated 50-50, leaving me with just Olly Schulz. I have been trying to get a couple of people on loan, but it's not easy at this time of year.

"St Albans are a strange side, they have been blowing hot and cold with their results, so we will be wary."

The Christmas schedule offers Dover a chance to catch runaway league leaders Newport County, who hold a 10-point lead at the top of the table.

During the festive period, Dover play Lewes home and away either side of the visit of Chelmsford City.

Hessenthaler said: "I think if we can get through the period unbeaten that will be a decent return for us. It's always tough with games in a short space of time.

"We've all pulled together to get us out of the sticky patch and we are now five games unbeaten."

His problem not ours, says Daish

Fleet boss shows troubled opponents no mercy

Ebbsfleet United v Histon

KICK-OFF 3PM AT STONEBRIDGE ROAD

By STEVE TERVET

HISTON arrive for this afternoon's game as a club in crisis, but Ebbsfleet manager Liam Daish insists their off-field problems will have no bearing on the fixture itself.

Steve Fallon's suspension as manager has been followed by the exit of four first-team players as a dispute over wages threatens to derail the Cambridgeshire club's season.

The Fleet have not been without their own problems this season and with his side still second-bottom in the Blue Square Premier, Daish has little concern for anything other than collecting three points this afternoon.

Motivated

He said: "I've got my own club to run, I don't know the full story and I'm not that interested in finding out. I've just got to get my players motivated, to make sure they're in good shape, physically and mentally.

"We've got to start well, get on the front foot and dictate things and then see what they're about. It's no good starting slowly because that allows them to get into the game. Once the first whistle blows, any problems Histon have got will be forgotten about."

Having faced three of the league's big hitters – Mansfield Town, Stevenage Borough (twice) and Oxford United – in recent weeks, the Fleet now enter a run of fixtures against some of the division's more modest sides.

After today, Daish's side take on Grays Athletic and Hayes & Yeading with both sides embroiled in the relegation dogfight, before travelling to Essex for the return against Grays on New Year's Day.

Daish said: "We've had a run of four or five really difficult games and these next few will still be difficult.

"We're playing teams who are a little bit different and we've got to take the belief and confidence from our last two home games. They will have a big say in our season and we have mentioned that to the players."

Midfielders Michael West and Alex Stavrinou, who both missed last Saturday's 2-0 FA Trophy defeat at Stevenage, are both likely to return today.

Stefan Bailey, having missed the Oxford game with tonsillitis, came through 90 minutes at Boro unscathed and should be fully fit today.

Picture: IGOR KUPCO

POINT MADE: Liam Daish wants his players to show Histon no mercy this afternoon

DEFICIT: Herne Bay (left) are in Euro action

Bay facing battle to stay in Europe

A FULL house is expected at the Pier this evening as Herne Bay United attempt to pull off an almighty shock to prolong their European campaign.

The English champions trail 10-0 to AFP Giovinazzo after last month's first leg in southern Italy, so face a huge challenge to reach the CERS Cup's second round.

About 500 fans will cram into the Pier in the hope of witnessing a comeback, although if United are successful it would not be unprecedented. A decade ago United lost their first game with French outfit La Vendeene, only to win the return leg 9-0 to progress.

Head coach Phil McVey acknowledges his side face a tall order but believes they are perfectly capable of winning.

He said: "Home turf makes a big difference in roller hockey and our rink is smaller than they'll be used to. I'm confident we can win the game, but whether we can score enough goals to go through is another matter.

"Everybody's looking forward to it, the atmosphere on European nights is always special. We've come back before so we know it's possible, but it's a big ask."

United should have a fully fit squad to select from, although their preparations have been far from ideal. In their previous competitive game a fortnight ago against Bury, they needed a last-gasp equaliser from Neil Austin to avoid a first domestic defeat of the season.

The club have also been hit by the resignation of second-team coach Ken Pughe, who has taken his entire squad to join up with a new club in Faversham.

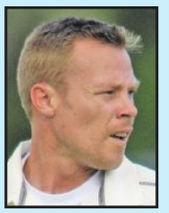
Doors open at 5pm to allow supporters a social skate on the rink, with the game itself beginning at 8pm.

Saggers earns a place on the list

FORMER Kent seamer Martin Saggers has been added to the first-class umpires' reserve list for next season.

The 37-year-old retired from first-class cricket at the end of last season, having spent 12 seasons at St Lawrence with Kent.

A knee injury limited him to just a handful of appearances in his final season but was able to demonstrate his umpiring ability in between playing. He passed the necessary umpiring qualifications in 2005 and has now been placed on the reserve list, together with Paul Baldwin, who has been a member of the ICC Associate and Affiliates panel since its inception in 2005.



ECB umpires' manager Chris Kelly said: "We are pleased to welcome Martin and Paul onto the reserve list for 2010 which increases the number of umpires available at this level.

"Along with the other members of the reserve list there are now plenty of opportunities for them to demonstrate their officiating skills within our domestic game and to aspire to being at the forefront of officiating the sport."

Schumacher return rumours could shunt Conway out of running in hunt for F1 place

THE return of seven-time world champion Michael Schumacher looks to have deprived Kent driver Mike Conway of the remaining Formula One seat at Mercedes Grand Prix.

The 24-year-old driver from Sevenoaks had emerged as a contender to replace outgoing world champion Jenson Button after being invited to test the team's car for the 2010 season.

Conway, who tested for the team when owned by Honda in 2007, completed 218 laps of Spain's Jerez Circuit three weeks ago, posting the fourth fastest time in last season's championship-winning car.

With only Nico Rosberg signed up for 2010, he seemed to have thrown his name into the hat.

However, with the team being officially taken over by Mercedes, former champion Schumacher has been heavily linked to a deal to return to Formula One racing with the team for 2010. Reports in the German media this week have described the move as a "done deal".

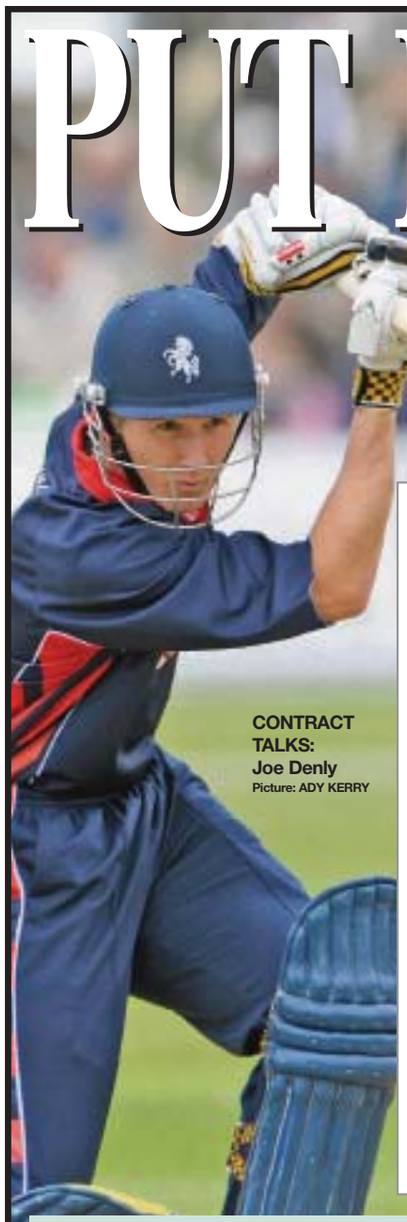
Mercedes Grand Prix chief executive Nick Fry has confirmed the team are in talks with Schumacher but refused to rule out other possible drivers for the seat.

He told the BBC: "He would be very good for our team. The view from inside F1, not just my team, is they all hope it will happen."

UNCERTAIN: Mike Conway's Formula One hopes

PUT DEN TO PAPER

Kent chiefs to start talks on contract extension to keep England ace



CONTRACT TALKS: Joe Denly
Picture: ADY KERRY

EXCLUSIVE

By GLENN PEARSON

KENT will hold talks with opening batsman Joe Denly this week about extending his contract at the St Lawrence Ground.

The Kent and England right-hander is out of contract at the end of next summer and the county are keen to tie him down to a long-term deal.

The 23-year-old, who is a product of the Kent Academy, will meet head coach Paul Farbrace and chairman of cricket Graham Johnson this week – along with his agent David Fulton – to thrash out a deal to keep him at the club beyond 2010.

He is the last batsman to sign a contract extension after skipper Rob Key, Geraint Jones and Martin van Jaarsveld penned new deals before the end of the season.

Darren Stevens signed a one-year extension to his contract that was due to expire next season, while promising talent Sam Northeast put pen to paper on a two-year contract earlier this month.

Farbrace told Kent on Sunday that he was delighted his top-order batters had committed their future to the club and was hopeful of thrashing out a deal with Denly this week.

"Everyone is pretty much where we want them to be, there is nobody causing concern with contracts," he said. "Everyone seems to be in a pretty decent place and are playing at a club they want to be at, which is good.

"The only one we are in discussion with is Joe Denly, who is in the last year of his contract. Obviously because he has been away we haven't been able to sit down and have a chat with him.

"There is a meeting pencilled in just before Christmas to sit down with him and tie him into a longer contract."

The Canterbury-born batsman, who hopes to be included in the England squad for the tour to Bangladesh in February, has previously expressed his desire to see out his professional career at Kent.

Farbrace, who coached Denly during his time at Kent's Academy, doesn't envisage any problems.

"He wants to play for Kent and he is Kent through and through. We are proud of what he has achieved, so I don't see any issues with that at all – hopefully he will be tied into a longer contract as well.

"That will be all of our main batters nailed on for the future, which is good news."

Fast bowler Robbie Joseph, who has returned to training in the indoor cricket centre at Canterbury after having had surgery on his shoulder, has also penned a one-year extension to his deal, keeping him at the club until 2011.

County players and coaches spread Christmas cheer during hospital visits

SEVERAL Kent cricketers and coaching staff handed out presents this week to children who will be spending Christmas in hospital.

Wicketkeeper Paul Dixey, all-rounder Matt Coles and coaches Paul Farbrace, Simon Willis and Phil Relf all visited children in the Kent and Canterbury Hospital and the QEQM in Margate on Friday.

Farbrace said: "It is really nice to see all the smiles on the children's faces.

"It is a great opportunity to cheer them up during their stay in hospital at Christmas time."

Kent players and staff pictured during the visit are (from left) Paul Dixey, Phil Relf, Matt Coles, Simon Willis and Paul Farbrace.

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